



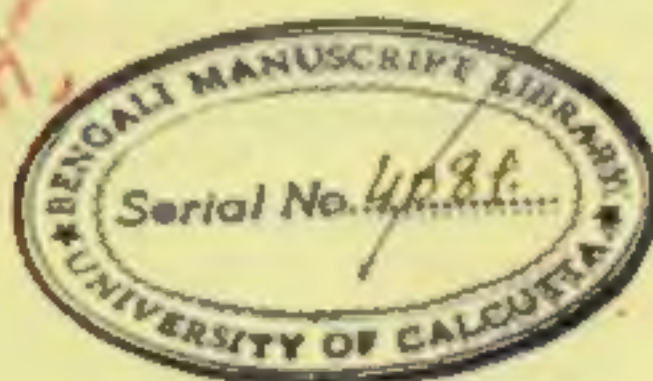
# A STUDY OF THE MAHĀVASTU - AVADĀNA

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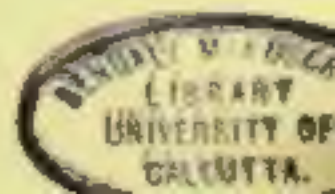
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## PREFACE

Dr. Radhagovinda Basak's study of the *Mahāvastu-Avadāna* was originally contributed to the J. N. Banerjea Volume. The present monograph is a reprint *ad verbatim* of that article.

The book consists of substantial portions of a series of lectures delivered by Dr. Basak as the Adhar Chandra Mukherjee Lecturer in Arts at the University of Calcutta for the year 1958. This has been published with the very kind permission of the Registrar, University of Calcutta.

The Avadāna stories contain important data of India's past and their detailed study often helps to illuminate many facets of ancient Indian life and culture. Dr. Basak's study of the *Mahāvastu-Avadāna* is the fruit of years of diligent labour and his treatment of it has been erudite and exhaustive.

As printing had to be completed in a hurry there will remain errors of editing and printing for which I crave the indulgence of the readers. The Association thanks Sri Dipak Sen for preparing the index to this monograph and to Firma K. L. Mukhopadhyay for matters of publication.

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University of Calcutta  
January, 1960*

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**INDIAN LIFE AS REVEALED IN THE BUDDHIST  
WORK, THE MAHĀVASTU-AVADĀNA**



# INDIAN LIFE AS REVEALED IN THE BUDDHIST WORK, THE *MAHĀVASTU-AVADĀNA*\*

RADHAGOVINDA BASAK

## I

### Political Aspect

INDIA is now a sovereign and independent country and is free from the unholy influence of foreign rulers who, wittingly and unwittingly, helped in the past the act of withholding of disclosure of her past history and civilization. Time has now come for us to strive to unravel all important aspects of our cultural heritage which we can possibly cull and collect from all kind of sources, including the literary ones. The most ancient and authoritative literary works, Brāhmanic, Buddhistic, Jaina, etc., deserve careful and critical study. Books like Patañjali's *Mahābhāṣya*, Kautilya's *Arthasāstra*, Bharata's *Nāṭyaśāstra*, the *Mahāvastu-avadāna* and the *Divyāvadāna*, the *Uvāsagadāsādo* and others are veritable mines of information about our past history and culture. We shall try to understand the evolution of modern Indian national life and culture in the light of what we can gather from our study of these very old Indian treatises, which form almost a virgin field of researches, so that the missing link between the ancient and modern Indian cultural thoughts may be discovered gradually to some extent.

For the last few years I have been studying the Buddhist Sanskrit work, the *Mahāvastu-avadāna* (written neither in pure Sanskrit, nor pure Pali, nor pure Prakrit, but rather in a conglomeration of all the three languages, generally called by scholars as '*the Gāthā dialect*', or '*mixed Sanskrit*') and to-day in my first lecture and in the next two, I wish to present to you the results of my study of this work, under the three headings: (1) political, (2) social and economic and (3) religious aspects.

At the outset, I wish to give you very shortly an idea of the form and content of the *Mahāvastu-avadāna*. This work be-

\* These three lectures were delivered by the author as Calcutta University Adhar Chandra Mukherjee Lecturer in Arts for the year 1958.



longs to the *Vinayapitaka* of the Buddhist canonical literature, prepared according to the text of the Lokottaravādins of the Mahāsāṅghikas of Madhyadeśa, who were the earliest schismatics of the Second Buddhist Council of the fourth century B.C. These Lokottaravādins, as you all know, were *believers in the doctrine of all the Buddhas being 'Lokottara' i.e. uncommon, extraordinary, and superhuman, who, according to them, adapted themselves to worldly life, only to external view.* The time of composition or compilation of this partly prose and partly versified treatise is according to late Mm. Dr. H. P. Sastri the third-second century B.C. But Winternitz was of opinion that the nucleus of the work probably originated as far back as the second century B.C., even though it was enlarged in the fourth century A.D., and later still. However, the *chief contents of the work* relate to biography of Gautama Buddha, adorned profusely with stories and miracles accompanying his conception, birth, renunciation, enlightenment, conversion of some great persons to his faith, and his demise. It also contains some old and new Jātaka stories (i.e. the stories of previous births of the Buddha). In the structure of this biography of the Buddha and his many-sided activities and the Jātaka stories, we can find out many an information regarding the ancient life and culture of the Indians. It is very curious that the *Mahāvastu* itself (III. 250) in some *gāthās* gives an eulogy of the work in these words—

“O revered sirs, the great *Mahāvastu* which is a repository of *dharma*, which is full of great knowledge, which can bring welfare to the great mass (of people), has been revealed by Sugata, the perfect Buddha, for the good of all living beings. Those who preach the *Saddharma* (the true *dharma*, i.e. Buddhism) and those who hear it preached, all attain the immovable or immortal *Nirvāṇa* (the blissful state).”

Some preliminary remarks on ancient Indian political constitution are necessary at the outset to enable us to com-

‘महान्तं सर्वसंभारं महाजनहितावहं ।

महावस्तुं महाज्ञानं भवन्तमुपतेन हि ।

सर्वसत्त्वानां हिताय संबुद्धेन प्रकाशितं ॥

ये च देशेऽस्ति सत्त्वमं शृणोति ये च देशितं ।

सर्वे ते अविगच्छन्ति निर्वाणवचनधनुः ॥





prehend easily the contributions of the *Mahāvastu* in this regard. It is now an established fact of Indian history that in ancient time India saw several forms of constitutional governments, such as *monarchical*, *oligarchical*, *republican* and *tribal states* which existed contemporaneously or at different periods of her ancient history, in different parts of the country. But the most prevailing form of early Hindu state-constitution was monarchical. It was not, however, an absolute monarchy, as some scholars might think. It was rather a political system controlled by *sachivas* (*sachivāyatta-tantra* as called by the author of the *Mudrā-rākshasa* drama). These *sachivas* (both *dhi-sachivas* or *mati-sachivas*, i.e. counselors and policy-makers and the *Karma-sachivas* or high executive state officers) formed, as it were, a healthy check to the king's becoming despotic and they were to some extent the unelected representatives in the Council of Ministers and the Administration. You all know that the doctrine of the *Saptāṅga* state is the epitome of the theory of ancient Hindu political constitution as advocated by Kauṭilya in his *Arthasāstra* and in all treatises on *rājantī*. The seven constituents of state are—(1) The *Sodmin* or *Rājā* (the sovereign), (2) *Amātya* (ministers, counsellors, and *Adhyakshas* or heads of the secretarial departments including all kinds of officers i.e. the whole bureaucracy), (3) *Janapada* or *Rāshṭra* (people of the country-side), (4) *Durga* (military forts and fortified cities, towns and townships), (5) *Kośa* (treasury or exchequer), (6) *Danda* or *Bala* (army with its different troops i.e. the *chaturāṅga* force) and (7) *Mitra* or *Suhrit* (allies). Beginning from Kauṭilya we have a traditional list of the eighteen *tirthas* or *mahāmātras* who are the highest ministerial functionaries in the body-politic (i.e. in the monarchies in India). During the time of the great Maurya emperors including Chandragupta, Bindusāra and Aśoka, this *mahāmātra* system of administration was in vogue, and we find from stray references in the *Mahāvastu* that the same system prevailed in its own time. I feel it necessary here to name these eighteen *mahāmātras* in this lecture. They are as follows:—(1) *Mantrin* (the Chief Counsellor or Premier or Chancellor), (2) *Purohita* (Royal Priest, the King's adviser on matters, spiritual and temporal), (3) *Senāpati*



(War Minister; according to others Commander-in-chief), (4) *Yuvārāja* (Crown-Prince or heir apparent), (5) *Dauvārīka* (chief of the Palace Police), (6) *Antarvamsika* (Superintendent of the Queen's Department or the harem), (7) *Prasāsta* (Inspector-General of Prisons), (8) *Samdhartā* (Collector-General of Revenue), (9) *Sannidhātā* (Chancellor of the Exchequer), (10) *Pradeshā* (Chief Magisterial Officer), (11) *Nāgarika* (city-Mayor), (12) *Pauravyavahārika* (Head of the Dharmasthas or judges i.e. the Chief Justice of the city), (13) *Ādmāntika* (chief officer for Mining and Manufacturing Departments), (14) *Mantriparishadadhyaksha* (President of the Council of Ministers), (15) *Dandapāla* (chief of the army staff, or the chief Punitive Officer according to others), (16) *Durgapāla* (officer-in-charge of forts and fortresses), (17) *Antapāla* (chief Frontier Officer, i.e. the Warden of the Marches), and (18) *Āparika* (officer-in-charge of the Forest tracts). It is evident that these functionaries cover almost all possible departments of the administration.

#### ORIGIN OF KINGSHIP AS IN THE MAHĀVASTU

I have stated elsewhere that in analysing the theory of state, or, in other words, the philosophy of sovereignty, the ancient political thinkers and teachers *could not forget the idea of the sinful aspect of human nature*, which always tends to interfere with the rights and liberties of others over their own security and property, and to violate morals and manners. Hence it is that a governmental institution was a necessity for controlling or coercing human viciousness and wickedness and for keeping secure the life and property of the people, and also preserving their assigned social duties. And it is the proper administration of the power of punishment by a kingly person that can save the society from passing into the condition of *mātya-nyāya*, as it is technically called in ancient Indian political philosophy, i.e., a state of lawlessness and anarchy in society in which the stronger people oppress the weaker, like the large fish devouring the smaller ones. So they felt that the fear of indignation and punishment by a kingly person ought to be the basis of the social order and of the welfare and security of the people.

The above political idea struck the mind of the ancient



Indian people too, and it is told in the *Mahāvastu* (Vol. I, pp. 358-59), when it related the history of the homes and origin of the *Sākya*s and *Koliya*s, that being oppressed by the three wrong and sinful acts, viz. of theft (चोर्य), falsehood (मृतावाद) and violence (दण्डरान) of the anti-social elements in society on account of which there appeared in society wrong and injustice (अदम and असदम), people wandered hither and thither, met together, discussed and ultimately selected from amongst themselves the most trustworthy (*sarva-prāsādika*) and the most authoritative (*sarva-mahatākya*) person to be their king and addressed the chosen person thus:—"Your Majesty is quite fit to punish him among us who deserves punishment and reward or favour him who deserves honour. We all approve of your being placed at the head of all men, i.e., we elect you to sovereignty over us all. And we shall offer you one-sixth of *śālī*-paddy grown in *śālī*-fields of each of us." Then the *Mahāvastu* states vividly certain words regarding such an origin of kingship according to which the king should be styled as *mahāsammata*, *rājā*, *mūrdhābhishikta*, and *janapada-sthāna-vīrya-prāpta*. These are thus explained in that book:—"Thus originated the idea that *mahāsammata* means the person elected by the great mass of the people, that *rājan* means the person who merits or deserves to have the *śālī*-portion from the *śālī*-fields, that *mūrdhābhishikta* (*kṣatriya*) means the appointed person who can perfectly guard and protect, and that *janapada-sthāna-vīrya-prāpta* means the person who has achieved the strength and power of the country's people, as he is as it were a father to the people of towns and provinces". This is how the king can declare—"I am king, an appointed noble (*kṣatriya*) and one who has achieved the strength and power of the country-people." This description of the origin of kingship in the *Mahāvastu* reminds us of the statement of Kaṭilya (I. 13) on the selection of the king by the people, forming a political community and entering into a social contract or compact according to which the elected king agreed to rule righteously and protect the rights and properties of his subjects, who

‘नवानस्माकं सत्त्वं निपुणरहं च निगृह्णातु, प्रहृष्टरहं च प्रगृह्णातु, वयं ते सर्व-  
सखाणां भवतामहे तं पश्येम, स्वकस्वकेषु शालिकेष्वेव वसंति शालिभान् दद्याम ।’



again agreed to pay him *tax in the shape of one-sixth of their field produce*. So it becomes clear that the king is paid to act as the servant of his people. The people of the *Mahāvastu* period held such a view on the relation between the king and his people.

Generally we learn from ancient books that the *princes or Kshatriyas* were either made kings or they succeeded to the hereditary throne. But we have in the *Mahāvastu* an instance of a Brahmana King of Mithila ruling in Varanasi III. 172. We also know that almost all ancient practical philosophers were of opinion that the eldest son should succeed to the throne after his father's death by the system of primogeniture. But the eldest brother could give up his right of succession to sovereignty to a younger brother asking the latter to take over the kingdom. A king could also establish a brother on the throne to deputize on his behalf during his absence from the capital III. 18, but the counsellors were to be informed of this arrangement. King Brahmadatta of Kampilla, having no son of his, conceived an affection for Prince Punyavanta III. 40, whom he gave his daughter to be married with and he established the son-in-law on the throne addressing the counsellors and the people of towns and countries thus:— 'He has become my son so he will become the king as I have grown old.' There are also many references in the *Mahāvastu* of marriage for political alliances of the parties concerned. Even a son born of a king's concubine Jenta by name, could be made a king under special circumstances.

### DUTIES OF A KING

All ancient Indian teachers of political science are of opinion that the *supreme duty* of a king is to contribute to the happiness *sukha* and welfare *hita* of his own people and to maintain as the *dharma-dartā* 'wielder of the sceptre', law and order in his own kingdom so that the life and property of his subjects may be well secured. *The king's other high duty* is to remain always vigilant over the doings of neighbouring and distant rulers of foreign states and to be ever ready for

'एषो मे पुत्रो जातो लोको लोको ममेव राजा सह बुद्धो ।



direct hostility towards them by an act of war, if necessary, against their aggressions. The *Mahabharata* contains many references to kingly duties *rajadharma* and matters of administrative importance in various contexts. But it treats of the duties of a ruler in some greater detail in a Jataka story named *Dasakumara-jataka* I (271-272) wherein we read of three sagacious and intelligent birds, an owl, a *chikā* or myavana bird and a *parrot* adopted as his sons by King *Brahmadatta* of Kasi living at Benares on the advice of a Himālayan ascetic, as the king had no human son of his own. These birds, having power to talk in human voice imparted to their father, the king, *some excellent lessons on rajadharma* in three very edifying lectures.

The first lecturer, the owl bird, says in the beginning of its lecture that a king should not fall into the power of anger, for both the material and spiritual prosperity and wisdom of a king can only be attained if he can restrain his anger.<sup>1</sup> Next the king is enjoined not to fall a victim to his own likes and dislikes and also to fear and intimidation. While *administering justice*<sup>2</sup> he is advised to hear the arguments of both parties in a dispute and decide the case righteously. The lecturing bird warns the king against constant engrossment in attractive worldly pleasures,<sup>3</sup> lest his enemies should overcome him. The king should protect his own dominion consisting of both towns and countryside *paura-śāhpadam rāshtram* and maintain them both and also his retinue by arranging for them *in a liberality of their essential requisites*,<sup>4</sup> so that his own people may not be alienated from him by his enemies. A policy of concession<sup>5</sup> or favour to the poor and preservation of the rich in newly acquired territories should be adopted by him. He should *attract large bodies of*

<sup>1</sup> अक्रुद्धस्य हि राजस्य सर्वो धर्मो जनाधिप ।

प्रजा कर्माणि सर्वान् तस्मात्तोयं निवारयेत् ॥

<sup>2</sup> उभयपक्षां वचनं श्रुत्वा यथाधर्मं समाहरेत् ।

<sup>3</sup> ईजनीयेषु कामेषु शान्तिवैलं प्रदीयति ।

प्रमत्तस्य हि कामेहि वरदान् कर्तुमर्हति ॥

<sup>4</sup> भोगैश्चप्रदानेन शमैश्चपुत्रयो भवे ।

<sup>5</sup> अनूयहं च शीनानां शान्तवानां परिपालनम् ।



immigrants to his own kingdom as was done by previous rulers. He is exhorted to cultivate friendship *mītra-bandha* and not enmity *ara-bandha* with rival kings *pratyaks*, for all people worship the rulers who contract abiding friendship with other kings. A king should *not indulge in irrelevant talk* but should resort to deliberation on politics based on proper reasons, and should *guard against disclosure of state secrets*, for, even great kings whose secret plans are revealed fall into great distress. Enemies of those rulers who can guard their secrets remain as slaves to him out of fear of estrangement from their own friends caused by the secret policy of their rivals. The king should always provide for the protection and security of his law-abiding people, for the wheel of *dharma* proper duties can only move if it can depend on the driving force of the king's military power. A king should be circumspect in all matters *samantatha samakalpan* and awake in taking care of his treasury and granary. A king's realm becomes prosperous *vridha* developed *spṛha* and populous *janakula* if he can rightly arrange for the protection of his people *through righteousness*. Thus can accrue wealth here and happiness hereafter.

The lecture of the second bird *Sarika* *māvanā*-bird refers to the dictum that every state stands steadily on two bases<sup>1</sup>, namely the king's acquisition of previously unpossessed properties and conservation of new possessions. But he should make efforts for these two acts righteously, for the realm *rashtra* of a king ruling unrighteously becomes weaker and rent on all sides. A king should know whom to curb or coerce, whom to reward, whom to bring to his own side and whom to favour, otherwise he stands the chance of losing<sup>2</sup> his material prosperity. A king should be vigilantly

<sup>1</sup> दुर्दमित्रो हि राजानो पुटेन्ति धनरा प्रजा ।

<sup>2</sup> भिक्षसम्प्रा हि राजेन्द्रा अनुभाति धनस बहुम् ।

<sup>3</sup> कर्त्तव्येभ्य आरम्भा सदा कर्त्तव्यं वादिष ।

अन्यथा हि निघात धर्मेषु दुर्वर्तते ।

<sup>4</sup> द्विभिरसु पारकैरतल अत्र लोक इतिष्ठितः ।

अनन्यनाभो अपेक्ष्य सर्वस्य वरिष्कण ॥

<sup>5</sup> यो निरुह न जानाति इरुह वा जनाधिप ।

सपहान्नुह वापि नो कर्त्तव्यं परिहासति ॥



alert in not appointing, to high posts of state in the frontiers, villages and the country-side, his own son and brothers if they are found to be variant, crooked and ill in temperament. Claimants to royal patrimony should not be humiliated, for, in that case they are liable to turn into dangerous enemies. A king should always weigh in his mind as to how to augment his own resources, curb his enemies and commiserate his own subjects in their distresses and difficulties. He should be careful about the movements near him of persons who may attempt to overhear his talking with his own men. He should always keep a watch on those who are brave, rich, prone to be won over by money, powerful in counselling and irksome. The king should select and appoint such men as ministers who are politicians, *artha-chintaka*, learned, uncovetous, loyal and leaders of people. A learned minister by his wisdom conducts to the welfare and happiness of the state and its ruler, whereas a covetous and foolish one is of no good to both the king and his kingdom. This lecturer advises King Brahmadata to institute a strong espionage system, for, there is no efficient eye for a king like the spys and there is no power like the spying system.<sup>1</sup> Lastly the bard says that the king's *pradhana*, i.e., the Chief of the Palace Police, should be wise and vigilant for ensuring the king's ease and comfort.

The third bird, the parrot, discussed on the five sources of the power which a king should desire to possess viz., 1. his brothers *sahodara-balam*, 2. his sons *putra-balam*, 3. his kinsmen and allies *matri-natta-balam*, 4. his four-fold army *chaturang-balam*, 5. his matchless wisdom *prajna-balam*. A king endowed with this five-fold power can surely make his kingdom serene, prosperous, rich and populous. Of all these powers, intellect or wisdom of himself and his counsellors is of the highest value for, by this the king shuns what should not be done and accomplishes what should be done. This is bound to bring blessings to himself, his friends and relatives

<sup>1</sup> विमानिता हि वायसा उदञ्जन्ती भोर्नित्ति शत्रुषः ।

<sup>2</sup> अमास्यां देव कुर्यासि परिश्रममर्थचिन्तकः ।

अलुप्यमनुरक्तं च राष्ट्रस्य परिपालयकः ॥

<sup>3</sup> नास्ति चास्मिन् बलं, नास्ति चास्मिन् नरो ।



and to the whole of his dominion. A man, i.e., a minister, who is deficient in wisdom, though he be of high birth, never becomes helpful to the king, nor dear to his people. The kingdom of such a king with weak intellect both in himself and his counsellors is destroyed by a valiant king, and his subjects *prahatā bhāṣaṁ vācāṁ ca śatāṁ ca* 'check another's superior'.<sup>1</sup> That chancellor of a king is highly honoured, who appoints to high offices of state persons brave, brave and discerning.<sup>2</sup> The lord then refers to the most essential virtue of *ādipūjya* a righteously and meritoriously *śānta* and of shunning the unrighteous and immoral ones, and thus doing he can expect to acquire glory in this world and heavenly bliss in the next. This is exactly the secretly conveyed which King Asoka stood for and the spirit of which broadcast throughout all his moral edicts. Almost an echo of the *Arthashastra* is *śānta* morality even in politics pervades this advice of the parrot-politician when he addresses the king of Kasi to do the right by his parents *Pharmanāyāna Mahārāja nāda pitaro hu pitaro* 'luxurious and with *pitradhī*, his allies and ministers *mitrāmītye*, the Śramanas and Brahmanas *Śramane Brahmane*, his citizens and country folk *janānānāpate*, and also by this world and the next. Such a king according to the *Mahāvastu*, walking in righteousness, goes to heaven.

Any careful reader of Kautilya's *Arthashastra* will be able to discern that the above political maxims and doctrines of the *Mahāvastu* are mere reflections of some of Kautilya's own political views. It may be assumed that the compiler or compilers of this Buddhist work possessed an excellent knowledge not only of the political philosophy of Kautilya, but also of the *Arthashastra* in principle of the Buddhist emperor Asoka. To my mind these discourses on royal duties represent a very good version in Vajrad Sanskrit or *gāthā* language of some of the important political principles of Kautilya. It

<sup>1</sup> विष्कला बहुनिदो वा अन्य भादन्ति स्वाधिकम् ।

<sup>2</sup> सतीव सतहृतो भवति पण्डितो अर्थचिन्तकः ।

अराम् दो वा स्थापयति क्षुण्णं दीनं विचरुणा ॥

<sup>3</sup> यज्ञः वा ब्रह्मलोकस्मि भवराजं वा स्वर्गंति ।

अधर्मं परिजगता धर्ममाचक्षते महा ॥

is difficult, however, to assert that this *Mahāvastu* Jātaka was pre-Kauṭilyan, it was rather a *post*-Kauṭilyan treatise.

### CHAKRAVARTIN KING AND THE SIXTEEN MAHĀJANAPADAS

We know of no sovereign as the lord paramount ruling over a very large North-Indian domain—*ex Chakravartin* king—universal king—before the establishment of the Maurya empire. Some of the Pāli texts e.g. the *Jācattara nikkāya*, the *Dīgha nikāya*, the *Chullavuddhesa* have lists of the famous independent *sixteen Mahājanapadas*—*big powerful state*—into which Northern India was divided and which flourished just before the Buddha's time—i.e. 567-487 B.C.—and most probably during his life-time also. The *Mahāvastu* casually refers in many places to sixteen *Mahājanapadas* as existing in *Jambudīpa* (India, II, 2, III, 394). In connexion, however, with Buddha's converting some of the people of these states, the treatise gives us in Vol. I—p. 31—a list of their names as follows:—

(1) Anga, (2) Magadha, (3) Vajji, (4) Malla, (5) Kāśi, (6) Kosala, (7) Cheti, (8) Vatsa, (9) Mutsya, (10) Sūrasena, (11) Kuru, (12) Pañchāla, (13) Śibi, (14) Dāsarna, (15) Asvaka and (16) Avanti.

It may be noted that in this list the sixteen powers or nations have been shown almost in eight pairs, as in the Pāli *Dīgha nikāya*. Again in Vol. III—p. 119—we have a second incomplete list of those states—i.e. fourteen only—without mention of Śibi and Dāsarna, but in one compound word in the following order, viz.—(1) Anga, (2) Magadha, (3) Vajji, (4) Malla, (5) Kāśi, (6) Kosala—then (7) Kuru, (8) Pañchāla, and then (9) Cheti, (10) Vatsa, (11) Mutsya, (12) Sūrasena, (13) Asvaka and (14) Avanti.

It may be noted that the two lists of the *Mahāvastu* omit the two states of *Gandhāra* and *Kambhaja* which occur in the Pāli list, but it substitutes in their places Śibi and Dāsarna.

Another point that should find mention in this connexion is that the *Dīgha nikāya* has preserved another smaller list of some of these states with the names of their capital cities and this has been reproduced in a somewhat corrupt form in the *Mahāvastu*—in *Maha-Govinda-sūtra*, III, 208-209. In this



sutra Mula-Govinda the Bishnuna said to King Renu of the story that there in the region of India was a wide expanse of seven kingdoms which he mapped out thus:—The centre belonged to King Renu. Then are mentioned: 1) the *Kanakas* with Dandapura as their capital, 2) the *Yonakas* with Purnya, 3) the *Uttaras* with Mithasuti, 4) the *Sauvira* with Roushi, 5) the *Jambus* with Mithua, 6) the *Ikshvakas* with Champi and 7) the *Kanva* with Varanasi (Banaras).

*It is probable that some of the sixteen states were monarchic and some others republican.*

Of the sixteen *republics*: 1) *Anga* comprised the modern districts of Bhojpur and Munger in Bihar. Its capital was the important city of Champi. It was once very flourishing and a centre of trade and commerce. The merchants from here went even to far-off Saurashtra, south parts of *Indra* and *Uttara* even the Hindus colonized in those countries, and Lake Champi was named after the name of Champi of Anga. 2) *Magadha* comprised the modern districts of Patna and Gaya in South Bihar. Its earlier capital was situated at *Roushi* (modern Ruzar). It was also called Garvika, a great stronghold from where, much later, the headquarters were removed to the newly-founded capital *Pataliputra* during the *Southern King Udaya's* reign. 3)

The *Ikshvakas* (the Ikshvaku), a *republic* with which was often associated the most powerful clan of the *Ikshvakas*, had their central capital at *Varanasi* (modern Banaras) in the Muzaffarpur district of North Bihar. The *Anga* territory included eight confederate member-clans *astakula*, the old *Vidhas*, the *Ikshvakas*, the *Joirikas* and the *Vrisps* being the most important among them. Of them *Vidha* clan had its capital at *Mitha*. The *Joirika* formed the clan to which belonged the great Mahavira, the founder of Jainism. They had one of their seats at *Kumbhagrama* in the suburbs of *Varanasi*. The four remaining clans were the *Ugras*, *Bhogas*, *Kauravas* and *Akshakas* who resided in the suburbs. 4) The *Mulas* were divided merely into two parts: those of *Kumbhara* (identified with *Kuresoma* 35 miles to the east of Gorakhpur) and *Padra* (identified with the modern village named *Padraona* some 12 miles to the north-east of *Kaura*). It is indeed a fact

that, as told in the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra*, the Mallas were sometimes called as Vāsisthas—men of the Vāsistha-gotra. The *Mahāvastu* in its story of Gautama's renunciation mentions that the Bodhisattva rode southward twelve *ma* from Kapilavastu to the territory *Uṭṭara* of the Mallas to an *adhivāsa* site named Anomiyā not very distant from the hermitage of the seer Vāsistha.\* Probably the locality of Vāsistha's hermitage influenced the Mallas to be called also Vāsisthas.† The province Janapada of *Kāśī* with its capital *Varanasi* is mentioned many times in the *Mahāvastu* in different contexts. It was a more archaic state, highly prosperous and it was the ambition of its rulers to become the most prominent amongst all other kings and the lord of the whole of Jambūdvīpa. *Indra* is the kingdom of *Kosala* was very famous during Buddha's lifetime. Ancient Kosala may be taken as corresponding to modern *Orissa*. It was however divided into two parts, north and south. *Sāvatthī*—modern *Saket-Satket* near *Gandak* district of U. P.—was the capital of North *Kosala* and *Kuruvastī* east of *Sāvatthī*. Buddhist Jātaka stories describe on many occasions a great rivalry between the two courts of *Kāśī* and *Kosala*, the latter having become more powerful by the conquest and annexation of the former. *Kāśī-Kosala* became later on a great power. Historians know that Kosala's rivalry with *Magadha* ended when that kingdom became absorbed into the *Maurya* empire, probably under either the *Sisunagas* or the *Mauryas*. Some texts attribute the fault of this rivalry between the *Kāśī* and *Kosala* to the latter. But the *Mahāvastu* in Vol. III, 449 ff. gives in the *Āyāta-Kaundinya Jātaka* that the king of Kosala was a virtuous and a mighty monarch, who was honoured for his generosity and liberality, intent on doing favour to others (*parānugraha-pravṛtta*) and having an eye to the next world (*paralokadarśin*) and he was regarded as *dharmika*.

But the King of *Kāśī* who was not other-worldly (*aparalokadarśin*) intended to invade the kingdom of the Kosalas. He invaded the land of the Kosalas, being fully equipped with the four arms, the elephant troops, the cavalry, the chariots

\* बोधिमतो दक्षिणेन द्वादश योजनानि नीतो मत्स्यविषय भर्तृमय आस  
सपिण्डान् वशिष्ठस्य श्वसिन्स्य आधमपदस्य नानिदूरे । महावस्तु, II 164

and the infantry. But his invading forces were routed and broken up by those of the Kosala Army. Kasi twice invaded the Kosala territory. In the conflicts many thousands of people, having exposed their bodies to the sword attack, *sakāśaśabala* and *ava*, fell into misfortune and calamities (नमः वरुणि राज्ञमहमार्जुन उभयतो अयमवस्थं असिगणैश्च शोभयति कार्ये उपनिषासेनैव अनयम्यमनमानावर्षान् III 350). A man in the meek attitude of the just, kind and considerate king of the Kosala came when he saw so much loss of men and resources because of the greed for a kingdom by the Kasi King who destroyed so many people and perpetrated so much of wrong *paritra*. Hence the Kosala King left his kingdom and went away to the Dakṣiṇapatha Dvīpa. While on journey there he met a sea-faring Kosalan merchant *saṃdāra yatra* *saṃdāra* who was proceeding by land coming from the southern sea *dakṣiṇato samudhāto* towards Kosiya after a ship wreck which caused the loss of all his cargo. He could not recognize the Kosala king now in disguise, but knowing of him as a compassionate and just ruler, always devoted to help others in poverty, he thought that his own country's king would grant him some money which would enable him to pay his trade again and to recover from the ship wreck disaster. Having told the disguised king of his loss of valuable wares at sea, the merchant expressed the hope that the king would give him material assistance. The king on hearing this story, wept and shed tears. The king disclosed his identity to the ship-wrecked Kosalan merchant and said that his kingdom was invaded by the Kasi ruler who robbed all its property. Realizing the despair of the merchant the Kosala king devised a new way and asked him to tie his arms behind and take him to the king of Kasi who would certainly be pleased to grant riches to the merchant because of his capture of the Kosala king. He was then taken to Kāśi and the king of that territory feeling amazed at the idea of the self-sacrifice of the Kosalan king de-lated—'It is not right for us to deprive such a righteous king of his kingdom.' He then consecrated once more the King of Kosala to his own throne.

\* न पुनस्तस्मात्क दृढं वारिकस्य राज्ञो राज्यमवहर्तुमिति । पुनरपि कोशमरामानं ह्यहो राज्यं नमिषिष्य कारिराज्यं वतः । (III. 353).



and left for his own kingdom and the Kosala King then bestowed on the merchant a large amount of riches.

This story serves as an evidence of the old struggle between the two kings of Kosala and Kuru and it is stated in the *Jataka-kavandhya Jataka* of the *Mahavastu*. But in a later period Kosala was annexed by the Kuru rulers to their kingdom. It may also be noted here that Kosala kingdom exercised political sway over the Sakyas of Kapilvastu in the Nepalese Terai and in the *Mahajama-Vedana* Buddha is mentioned as a Kosalan person ( भगवतो कसियस्ये मग्निर कसियस्ये )

7. The *Cheh* or *Cchedi* kingdom lay near the Yamuna river and between the Kurus and the Vatsis. Its capital is stated in Buddhist literature as *Suktimati* or *Suktimati* probably equivalent to *Suktimati* of the *Mahabharata*. In ancient period *Cchedi* corresponded roughly to the eastern part of modern Bundelkhand and its hilly tracts.

(8). The mahajanapada of the *Uttara* or *Vamsa* was situated south of the Ganges on its right bank near that of *Cchedi*. Its famous capital was *Kanauj*. King *Udayana* of this kingdom was very powerful and was Buddha's contemporary. His rivalry with the Avanti King *Pradyota* is a historical fact. Most literature states that at last *Udayana* fled with the king's daughter, *Vijayadatta*.

(9). The mahajanapada *Matra* may be regarded as corresponding to modern Jajpur in Orissa. Its ancient capital was *Uratana* (modern *Berat*). This country is associated in Buddhist literature with the *Surasena*. According to our late friend Dr. H. C. Ray Chaudhury it was probably, after loss of its independence as a monarchical constitution, annexed to the neighbouring kingdom of *Cchedi*.

(10). The territory of the *Surasena* had its capital at *Madhura*, also called *Mathura*. Buddhism grew here after its king, named *Avantiputra*, was converted to be a disciple of the Buddha. Krishna-worship was prevalent here at the time of Megasthenes when *Surasena* had already become an integral part of *Magadha*.

(11). The *Kuru* territory was a big one and it had its capital *Indrapatna*, i.e., *Indrapatna* near modern Delhi. The town of *Hastinapura* is also mentioned to have been situated in this kingdom. In Buddha's time this country is known to have

been under a titular chieftain named Korava. It later changed its monarchical constitution to a republican one, as is also referred to in the *Arthashastra* of Kautilya, and the Kurus were known as *raja-sādhopajīvanah* (using only the title of *rājās*).

2. The old *Panchala* territory (comprising modern *Rohilkhand* and a part of the *Central Provs.*) was divided into two parts, northern Panchala with *Teuchhalata* (modern Rampur) in the Bareilly district as capital and southern Panchala with *Kanpur* in the Farrukhabad district wherein once lived and ruled the famous legendary universal king Brahmadatta, who is, however, described in the *Mahāvastu*, as the king of Kasi. The famous city of *Kanva-kubja* (*Kanva*) was situated in Panchala territory. Later this monarchial constitution changed for a republic, as we also find in Kautilya's *Arthashastra*. Next to it, in which, like the Kurus, the Panchālas established a Śrenī or Sangha form of government in which the elders were *rāja-sādhopajīvanah*.

In the *Kusa-stotra* story as related in the *Mahāvastu* we observe that the Queen-mother Abindā asked her ministers and priests to send out Brāhmanas and messengers (*dutas*) to the cities and provinces in all quarters to find a suitable bride for her son, Kusa, son of King Ikshvaku of Kasi. The Brāhmanas and messengers scoured the sixteen janapadas and came to the city of *Kanva-kubja*<sup>1</sup> which is stated here as situated in the province of *Sūrasena* and there they found a King of *Madrakas*, named Mahendraka, reigning there and his daughter Sudarsana the most beautiful maiden in whole Jambudvīpa was selected to be the bride of Kusa to become his chief queen. So we find here *Kānvakubja* situated in the janapada of *Sūrasena* and not Panchalas.

3. The territory of the *Sibi* (old *Sibi*) people were most probably the inhabitants of the *Shorkot* region in the *Jhang District* of the *Punjab*, below the junction of the *Jhelum* and the *Chenab*. Their capital was at *Sibapata* (modern *Shorkot*). Alexander met the *Sibi* people in that region in the fourth century B.C. Probably the *Sibis* later migrated to *Rajasthan*.

<sup>1</sup> ते यानि बह्विधा च द्रुवा च जनपदान्वमाना दूरमेतेषु जनपदेषु कस्यदुक्तं नाम तान् तत्र अनुगम्या । तत्र महेन्द्रको नाम महाराजा राज्यं कारयति ।

and lived in Madhyamika (modern Nagari near Chitor), an ancient city known to Patanjali's *Mahābhāṣya*. Coins of the Śibi-janapada were also found. It had a republican constitution. The Śibi are also found mentioned in some Pali Jātaka stories.

(14) The people of *Dāsarna* are placed by late Dr H. C. Ray (Chandhury) as dwelling on the river Dasan (Dhasan) in Bundelkhand. But Kālidāsa places these people in the Vidisa or Bhilsā region. It was, according to this view, a country forming the eastern part of *Mithila* with its capital at *Lidnā* (modern Bhilsa) situated on the Vetravati or Betwā of the *Megasthenes* (xx, 24-25) and Kālidāsa also makes Vidisa a river which is probably the same as Beas, that joins the Betwā.

(15) The *Assaka* (Assaka or Pali Assaka) country was on the banks of the Godavari with its capital at *Polana-nagara*. In some Buddhist texts it is associated with Avanti and it seems probable that its territory approached the southern part of Avanti. Some old scholars took the country as representing the *Maharashtra*. In Buddha's time the ruler of Assaka was a king, Prince Sujata being his son.

(16) In Buddha's time *Avanti* was a great kingdom under king Pradyota Mahāsena, father of Vasavadattā, queen of Udayana—the other famous contemporary rival kingdoms then being those of *Magadha*, *Kosala* and *Vatsa*. This country roughly comprised the *Ujjain* region. This mahājanapada was divided into two parts—the northern one with *Ujjayini* as capital and the southern with the capital at *Mithismati* as stated in Buddhist literature. *Ujjayini*, modern Malwā, Nimar and some adjoining parts of the Madhya Pradesh formed the ancient Avanti kingdom.

We have noted above that the *Mahācastu* list of the sixteen mahājanapadas did not contain the names of Gandhāra and Kamboja, as in Pali lists, but it mentioned in their place the Śibi and Dāsarna countries, although we have some reference to both these countries in some contexts of this treatise. We briefly state that:

(16a) *Gandhāra* represented the country formed by modern Peshawar, and Rawalpindi districts in the northwest (now in western Pakistan), with its capital at *Takshatila*



Taxila which was in olden days a great centre of trade and learning.

It may be noticed that Gandhara finds a mention in Pāṇini's grammar and it appears that it was situated 'as pointed out in I H Q' recently by Prof D. Kaupjal, to the south of the Kopan comprising the valley of the Kabul river. Some Buddhist stories take Kashmir as included within Gandhara, which with Lokshaydā is also mentioned in Asoka's Inscriptions.

126. The association of Gandhāra with the neighbouring country of *Kamboja* is well-known. This country *Kamboja* formed a huge province round about ancient Rāppur (modern Rawari near Peshawar) and included the *Harra Dhera* now in western Pakistan extending probably as far as Kashmir. In the earlier period it had a monarchical constitution, but in Kautilya's *Arthśāstra* we find the *Kambojas* as *being a Samudra type of republic, living on agriculture, cattle breeding, trade and commerce and war-weaponry* (*śāstra śāstra māt*). According to Professor D. Kaupjal 'the territory watered by the head waters of the Oxus and comprising the Gdard speaking areas of Pamir was known from the age of Pāṇini as *Kamboja*'. This country is also mentioned in Asokan Inscriptions. In some Buddhist works these people are said to have non-Aryan customs. The *Mahāvastu* II 115 refers to the well-trained good horses *Kambojika* as *aśvaśubhā* of this region.

Besides the above mentioned countries (*janapada*) and towns (*nagara*) the *Mahāvastu* has mentioned in various contexts many other geographical sites, such as, the mountains *Himavanta* the *Himālayas*, the *Vindhya*, the *Kailāsa*, the *Gandhamādana*, the *Jugandhara*, the *tabulouo Meru*, *Sumeru* the rivers, *Ganga*, *Yamunā*, *Satadru*, *Nairāñjanā*, *Sarasvatī*, *Godavari*, the *Narmadā*, the *four continents* ruled by a universal king, a *chakra arita* of *Jambudvīpa* *Pāṇatideha*, *Aparagodhātā* and *Uttarakuru*, *China* (*Chin*), and the *Dakṣiṇāpātha*, *Kāśyapa* the towns *Sunāpura*, *Hastināpura*, *Gāyā*, *Champa* III 204, *Srāvastī*, *Varāṇsī*, *Madraka* country *Dīpavatī* *Mathurā*, *Māru*, *Rāspattana* *Mrigadāva*, *Kapilavastu*, *Nālanda* village, *Lumbini* village, *Uruvilvā* village, *Gṛdhrakūṭa*, *Dantapura* III. 204, 359, 362,

Gaṇitika III, 93; Senāpatigraha (III, 299, 416, 427),  
Sārathipura (III, 319), etc.

### DESCRIPTION OF A PROSPEROUS KINGDOM

Whenever an opportunity presented itself the *Mahābhārata* described a prosperous kingdom of a good and righteous king, whether of Kōśa, Kōśala, Vidura, Pāṇḍhāla or any other province almost in similar terms. Firstly a universal king (*chakravartin* ~~chakravartin~~ *chakravartin* or a *raja-chakravartin*) is described as holding political sway over the four continents, *Jambudīpa*, *Pratyutkṛta*, *Iparagadānka* and *Uttarakuru*. He is triumphant, just a *dharma-raja* righteous king, possessing the seven excellent treasures (*saptaratna samanvagata*) namely, 1) the wheel-treasure (*chakratatna*), 2) the elephant-treasure (*gajatatna*), 3) the horse-treasure (*asvatatna*), 4) precious gem-treasure (*maniratna*), 5) the household-treasure (*griha-patitana*), 6) the woman-treasure (*stri-tatna*), and 7) the leader-treasure i.e., the treasure of a large body of counsellors and administrators (*pauṇḍarikatatna*). Such a universal king is said to possess a large number of brave, courageous and comely sons who are able to vanquish all foes. In this context we can cite the instance of a just (*dharma-raja*) king of Kōśala (III, 446-447) who is described as virtuous (*kṛtāpunya*), majestic (*mahesakhya*), powerful (*mahābala*), wealthy with large treasures (*mahākora*), and having great conveyances (*mahā-ghana*). His dominion is prosperous (*vidura*), well developed (*phita*), peaceful (*kṣema*), well-supplied with food (*subhiksha*), having a thick population (*ākṛma-jana-manuchya*) and subjects living very happily (*sukhyata-manushya*). In the kingdom of a good king all violence, noisy affairs, riots or revolts are kept quelled (*pratānta-danda-dimba-damata*) and the robbers and thieves are held in check (*ugrihita-tuskara*). The realm thrives in trade (*vyava-hāra-sampanna*) and is governed with justice (*dharma-paripālya*). Such a king's renown spreads in all countries as being very liberal and generous in distributing charities (*dāna-samvibhāgātita*). His kingdom is free from providential calamities and disturbances (*nirupadrata* and *niritika*) and is without the troubles caused by the unsocial elements in society (*akantaka*).

A KING BANISHED BY THE COUNSELLORS AND THE  
PEOPLE FOR OVER-CHARITABLENESS

The Buddha once praising of merits and virtues before the congregation (vide *J. 2. in Jataka* III 41 ff.) told them of King Virudha of Mithila for his liberality and generosity. This king could not refuse to give anything to Sramanas, Brahmins, the poor and the beggars. Whoever wanted an elephant, a horse, chariot, a conveyance, a woman, male and female slaves, clothes, vessels, cows, gold, cash-money, etc. i.e. whoever wanted anything, the king used to fulfil his desire. He felt exaltation<sup>1</sup> by liberality and charity and never regretted his gifts afterwards. Now on account of his excessive largesses, *there was depletion of the royal offer.*<sup>2</sup> So the officers of the *panchika* department, Accountants, the great state-functionaries, the hereditary counsellors, and the townsmen and country folk and the mass of people all met together and after deliberation banished the king to settle in a forest grove in the Himalayas. So we find that a democratic force was prevalent even then for advising the ministers for banishing a king who caused a failure of treasuries by his gifts. Of course, the king was later restored to his own throne by those very persons who had driven him out, because they found their kingdom fallen in draught, and short of food, and oppressed by thieves and enemies since his banishment.

<sup>1</sup> भवत्सु दहन्तो परित्यजन्तो मात्तमनो भवन्ति न च वस्त्रा पदबाहुस्तप्यन्ते ।

<sup>2</sup> सो दानि अतिदानं ददाति कोडाग्निं क्रोधन्तीति । गलकेहि च ब्रह्माग्नेहि च कुमारमात्मेहि च संगमज्जानपदेहि च महाज्जकायेन च तन्निर्वातित्वान्नं ततो राज्यमनो विप्रवर्जितो समानो अर्जुहमवन्तो महावनक्षणे ।



## II

### Social and Economic Aspects

#### PART I

It is known quite well to you all that the materials for drawing out a picture of social life in ancient India are well provided by the *Grihya-sutras*, the *Śrauta-sutras*, the *Dharmasutras* and the *Smṛiti-saṃhitā* and that scholars have dealt with them in their various contributions. We are here concerned only with some supplementary matters on certain topics of social life as we could collect from our study of the *Mahāvastu*.

There are numerous references in this treatise of the different members of the society of the times, e.g. the Brahmanas, the Śramanas, the Kshatriyas and also of the merchants (*śreṣṭhins*), the craftsmen, the artisans, and many other sorts including the Chandalas and Pukkakas. This book does not, however, clearly state anything about the *chaturvarṇa* and *chaturāśrama* in so many words. There are only a few references to these two systems with regard to description of non-Buddhist members of the society, specially of those who embraced the Brāhmanic faith. Generally we do not find much about the rules of castes and orders in this book. That the highest status of social life was assigned to the Brāhmanas and Śramanas is evident in it, and next comes the status of the ruling class, the Kshatriyas. In the second, i.e., the economic section of this lecture we shall deal with a very large number of guilds of traders, craftsmen and artisans, who must have belonged to other classes of society-men mostly the Vaisyas and Sudras. Not much stress is given in this book on the *jāti* or birth or family in which people were born. But merits of individual persons and virtuous life alone did count with the people of the *Mahāvastu*-period. Disabilities of the earlier period of Brāhmanic influence on the Sudras are not much in evidence here and they only reappeared in society, as you know, in still later periods of Indian history.

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## SLAVES AND SLAVERY

The system of slavery was prevalent in ancient India from very early times. The Smṛiti books give descriptions of various kinds of slaves, acquired by birth, purchase, gift, capture and other methods—and their social disabilities are also mentioned therein. Slaves, both male and female, lived in householders' families. These books also provide legal ways for the release of people from slavery and servitude. Generally speaking, they worked as household servants. Kings and rich men of the Indian society possessed slaves in large numbers to work as such. They were often treated in an inhuman way.

The *Mahāvastu* enjoin in one passage (I 11) that those people in the world who cause slaves to be shackled with fetters and chains and get them work brutally, are liable to be reborn in a hell on account of maturing of their cruel and sinful deeds. The book also says that enslaving of beings who are without protection or refuge is a sinful action and those who do so, go to hell. Rich merchants used to possess large numbers of bondsmen (*dhātva*) and bondswomen (*dātvā*) in their house. Reference to slaves' reciting wise sayings even to kings is found in this treatise (I 91). Often kings are seen to make gifts of slaves, male and female, to those who needed them in times of distress. Suddhodana's palace was crowded with slave women (*cheta*) and courtesans (*caritā*) and also fair looking women standing still or moving about, and even holding scimitars in their hands (*prasthita-khad-ga-ha-ha*). Reference is obtained to a possible faithlessness of a man to his wife of high degree, chaste and devoted, and to his new faith in a slave girl (II 57). (*Cheta*) slave girls often served in the house of rich courtesans also (cf. *Avamā-jātaka*, II 166 ff). The venerable Mātākasyapa once reported to Ananda that he left his comfortable home wherein there were five hundred bondsmen (*dhātva*) and so many bondswomen (*dātvā*). In the house of Sāriputra's father at Nandagramaka there lived a large number of female and male slaves. Even in rich priestly Brahmana families, along with abundant resources, a large number of both male and female slaves worked. This was in Avanti, Agon at Mathura and Kāmaras

in the house of guild-presidents (*śreṣṭhikas*), many male and female slaves found occupation. King Bimbisara granted amongst other gifts a hundred female slaves to his Brāhmin priest and tutor for the latter's celebrating the glory of the Buddha who came to his kingdom. Thus we see that slavery as a system prevailed in India at the time of the *Mahānir* period also.

#### HARLOTS OR THE PROFESSION OF COURTESANS

Ancient Indian society acknowledged the profession of *ganikas* or courtesans as an institution. Kings kept courtesans in royal courts. These courtesans enjoyed a social status on account of their high accomplishments. They were proficient in the arts of singing, acting and playing on musical instruments and expert in attracting the mind of rich people. They were fully possessed of the art of wiles for seducing their lovers. You know that there is a chapter in Kautilya's *Arthaśāstra* named *Ganikadhikāśa* (II-27) from which we can get an idea of the profession of these harlots who enjoyed a status recognized even by the Administration which, through the *adhyakṣins* or superintendents, could determine the earnings, inheritance, income, expenditure and future prospects in their profession and realize some particular taxes from them. In this connection we may remind ourselves that one of the most beautiful and earliest Sanskrit dramas, the *Mr̥cchakatika*, contains the thrilling record of how a very rich and highly accomplished and noble minded courtesan named Vasantasena, felt happy and fortunate in contracting genuine love for a very respectful and accomplished person, Charudatta—a Brahmana of a lofty social order—and how at last by the king's decree they were both united in marriage and the bride, Vasantasena, once a harlot, obtained the state permission to assume the highly covetable social status of a householder's family, viz., a *gṛhasthī*—house-wife.

It may now interest you to know further that we find in the *Mahābhārata* as in the Pali literature, that the famous courtesan of Vaisali, Amrapalika by name, accompanied the Lichchhavis to give a grand reception to Lord Buddha during his visit to Vaisali. Courtesan Amrapali even entertained Lord Buddha by an invitation to her house for a meal to be



taken along with his disciples and after the hospitality she made over her Mango-grove to them. It may sound strange that we read in the *Mahavastu* of an ancient king of Saketa named Sajāta who had five royal princes through a duly married Kshatriya wife. But the king had a concubine named Jenti whose son was named Jenti. Jenti pleased the king by her womanly qualities and the king, being gracious to her, offered her the choice of a boon. I. 348. She asked her parents about the king's wish and they advised her to ask for the boon of a good village. *यमवर याचार्ह सि* for them. There was there a certain female devotee (*pārṇāṣikā*), learned, crafty and intelligent, who remarked to Jenti saying thus—“You are yourself the daughter of a concubine, your son has no right to any of his father's properties, not to speak of his kingdom. *‘अस्मिन् स्व वेत्तासि कार्यं भीता, तव पुत्रो न किञ्चित् वंशस्य राज्यस्य प्रभवति, किं पुन राज्यास्य’* I. 349. But those five princes, sons of a Kshatriya noble woman, have full right to their father's kingdom and estate. *‘एते पञ्च कुमारं क्षत्रिय-कन्यापुत्रा ते वंशस्य राज्यस्य च राज्यस्य च प्रभवन्ति’* I. 349. This *pārṇāṣikā*, moreover, pointed out to Jenti that King Sajāta was a man not to go back on his word and being truthful was sure to keep his promise. So she advised Jenti to request the king thus—“Barish. O King those five sons of yours from the kingdom and anoint my young son Jenta as heir to the throne.” *‘यत्ताराज, एतां पञ्च कुमारं राज्यातो विप्रवासेरवा येन कुमारं यवराज्ये अभिनिष्ठाहि’* I. 349. Jenti did request the king as directed, and the king granted her the boon asked for, although he was sorely troubled on account of his love for the five princes, but having offered a boon to his concubine, he could not do otherwise. Almost the whole body of people of the cities and provinces accompanied the five banished princes to the Himālayan region. We find here in the story that generally a concubine's son by a king had no right to paternal property, but the king could create such right by appointing his concubine's son to succeed even to the throne.

It may, again, interest you to know that in the *Mahāvastu* II. 166-177 there is a Jātaka story called the *Sāma Jātaka* in which we have a graphic picture of the life and conduct of

a very rich courtesan of Banaras, named Svāmā, who lived in the courtesans' quarter or street of the city and who was described as extremely rich in gold and silver furnitures and jewellery, also as having a suite of many servants, slaves, labourers and maids. Her love for a merchant, named Vajrasena, a horse-dealer (माधवाह भद्रवर्जितप्रक) hailing from Takshasila, who came down from that far off north-western region to Banaras with a caravan of horses, and his wrong conviction by the royal court of Banaras for alleged theft in the royal palace and the king's order for his execution and his subsequent escape through bribery arranged by Svāmā and his ultimate unfortunate attempt to drown to death his mistress, Svāmā, in her residential lake, when she was made dead-drunk, may provide us with materials for tracing the throttling of Vasantasenā by Sakara in the *Mrichhakatika* drama. There is another agreement between the two stories. Svāmā also, like Vasantasenā, was, with the king's permission, allowed to live as a member of the household of the father of a former lover of hers. It seems that such raising of courtesans to a high social status was indeed a kind of legalization of an illegitimate social act of the age. By the way, we have a reference in this Jataka-story to actors of Taxila coming down to Banaras for performance of their dramatic art and Svāmā could understand the conversation of the actors in a Northern dialect or speech which could be well understood by her, although she was an inhabitant of Banaras, because of her previous company with the horse-dealer of Taxila, Vajrasena, her former paramour from whom she must have picked up that dialect. सर्वे दानि इयामासे तेवो नटहायकानामुत्तरापथकं भाष्यं प्रगृहीतं" II. 175. Rūpavanta, the son of a counsellor of a king named Anjanaka of Banaras, always spoke in praise of beauty, thinking that it (beauty) was the supreme thing in the world and to show his comrades the truth of his beauty he went down to a stall in the market of the city of Kampilla where he caught the eye of a leading courtesan (gita-anka) who fell in love with Rūpavanta, because he was so charming, comely and stately with perfect beauty of complexion. The courtesan invited him to her fine dwelling-house through a maid as messenger. The

beautiful man was bathed with perfumed oil, bathing powders and exquisite ointments and was arrayed in garments of Kāsi silk and was given costly food to eat. At Rupavanta's instance the courtesan gave him three thousand pieces of gold coins to the four companions of his. When the companions came there, they saw Rūpavanta sitting in the arms of the lady. Rupavanta told his friends that by beauty only he had won a store of wealth in a courtesan's house. So we see that leading courtesans possessed much wealth. The names of two other courtesans of Banaras named Kaski and Upārdhaski of lovely body which they got as a maturing of their good Karma in their former lives are found mentioned in the *Mahāvastu*, their fee being very high.

It is not strange that the high class courtesans (*ganikās*) were addressed by people with the title *arya bhātā* (daughters of Aryas). Dispute often arose regarding their fees *bhātakā*, which were generally charged high from merchant's sons (*Śreṣṭhi-putras*).

### SONG MARRIAGE CUSTOMS

Marriage in Indian life has always been held as a religious sacrament and it is never even now taken as a contract of a secular nature. There have always been some prohibitions of marriage-union between cognates and agnates although there are also some exceptions, e.g., the custom of marrying the maternal uncle's daughter among the southerners. In the history of the homes and origin of the Śākyas and Koliyas (on Vol. I of the *Mahāvastu* pp. 333-359) we have a clear reference to the political fact that the town of Śāketa was the capital of the joint state of Kāśi and Kosala and that the Śākyas of Kapilavastu had a sort of political subordination to the Kosala rulers. In the story of the *Mahāvastu* we also read of the banishment of the Śākya princes, the sons of King Śaṅkha, from Kāśi-Kosala and of their travel towards the Himalayan region where was situated the hermitage of Rishi Kapila, probably the founder of the Sāṃkhya system of philosophy from whose name, it is stated there, the Śākya capital was so called—Kapilavastu, “अविम्व नामेन कपिलवस्तु” I. 351, “कपिलेन अविना वस्तु दिक्षु ति कपिलवस्तुमनाम्णा उचयानि”



I. 352: These princes lived for some time in the Śākotā-grove of that region whereto used to go merchants from Kāśī-Kosala and whereto merchants came out to the latter place for trading purposes. It is described that these princes, out of fear of defilement of their special race, arranged mutual marital connection of their own female relatives and sisters among themselves, that is to say that they did not seek their marriage relationship with other racial families, lest their blood should be polluted. This historical information reminds us of the prevalence of a similar practice described also in some Pali Jātakas in the early *setthi* families, of marrying within their *jāti* and such marriages amongst themselves were regarded as desirable and underogatory. This may be treated as due to a deep concern of these rich racial groups of commercial community for equal marriage and purity of blood. In the *Mahāvastu* story referred to above, we find King Sujāta asking his ministers as to whence those princes had arranged to get their wives and they answered referring to the prevailing custom as stated above ("राजा अमात्यानां पृच्छति । कुतो कुमारैहि वाराणि भाजोतामि । अमात्या आहन्तु — धृत् भो महाराज कुमारैहि जातिसदोषभयम् स्वकस्वका येव धातुयो भगिनो यो परस्परस्य विवाहितायो, सा यो जातिसदोष भविष्यतीति ।" I. 351. It should not sound strange that on the king's reference to the royal chaplain *purohita* and the learned Brahmanas *Brāhmana-pāṇḍitas* as to the propriety of such marriage relation the latter gave their approval to it saying that such actions as taken by the princes could be permitted ("शक्या एतच्च कर्तुं यथा तेहि कुमारैहि कृतम्" I. 351 and there would accrue to them no sin for taking such a step ("शक्य महाराज कुमारान् ततो विवाहं बोधेन न लिप्यन्ति" I. 351). King Sujāta became highly pleased on hearing of this verdict from the Brāhmana-Pāṇḍitas and made a solemn utterance (*udana*) to the effect that the princes would henceforward be called Sakyas, i.e., fit to be permitted for taking such wives) and that their name or title would be Sakyas or the Sakyas ("शक्या पुनर्भवन्तो कुमारः । तेषां राज्ञि कुमारानां शक्य शकिया लिप्याक्या समानाप्रकृति उच्यन्ति" I. 351).

As regards the various marriage rites we find from the *Nalini-Jātaka* as told in the *Mahāvastu* III. 150-151, that

the royal priest of the king of Banaras gave the royal maid, Nalini in marriage to the veer Ikasinga, joining their hands. The veer's father Kassapa told his son that during his marriage he had to call the *deva* of the fire to witness, and to perform the water-ritual, and to join his hands with those of Nalini, and that they could not forsake each other through all their lives. ('सो दानि न पुन एकत्र न श्विकुमार आह—पुन एवा तव त्वनिनो राजकुमारी अग्निदेव साधोक्तवा उवकेन वाणिगृहीता विमा । एवा ते भार्या स्व न पुनत्या धति । न सखा दुष्टभाभि परस्परस्व स्पर्जितु" III 15). Very likely the allusion of giving a girl to wife by the water-ritual is to the vessel of water which is carried by one who follows the pair of bride and groom when they go round the fire, and sprinkles them with water at various points of the circumambulation ("एतेन तु एवा भार्या अग्नि प्रदक्षिणोक्तवा उवकेन वाणिगृहीता भार्या सखा ति" III, 151).

In this connection I shall refer my readers to a peculiar marriage as described in the famous story of the *Kusa Jataka* (Vol. II and III) as delineated in the *Mahavastu*. Briefly it may be stated that Kusa's father, King Ikshvaku of Banaras had Abinda his duly wedded chief queen, and a harem of four hundred and ninety-nine mistresses, all of whom were barren. The king was pining for a male offspring and reflected that although he had an extensive realm and such a large harem, yet he had no son and he feared that he would remain childless until he died and his country would fall a prey to his enemies. The king consulted his household priest and the latter counselled to the king a most unpast, unseemly and improper course, advising him to let out his entire harem, keeping only Abinda, the chief queen in the palace, three times a week to take pleasure with whatever man they liked in order that King Ikshvaku might have descendants. Śakra, the Trāyastriṃśa deva, disguised as a decrepit, aged, senile Brāhmana appeared before the king's court in Banaras and chose queen Abinda for himself. The King asked the old man to choose another woman, but the Brahmana told the king not to go back on his word and break his promise first giving him the choice of any woman of his harem. The King permitted the queen to go with the old Brahmana, who at

the close of the night stood before Alindā in his own form of Śakra and offered her the choice of a boon and the queen chose the boon of a son. Indra granted her prayer and gave her a medicinal pill advising her to stir it in water and swallow it and surely she would get a son who would be like a lion, strong and able to crush his enemy. He also said: "There will be no one in the whole world equal to him in powers. But that son will be ill-favoured of complexion and form, because the queen did not provide him with the joy of rapture as promised by the King. The King in anger did not give the Queen to swallow the pill but he ground it on a stone, stirred it in water and gave it to his four hundred and ninety-nine young queens to drink on a blade of kusa grass. But Alindā, the chief Queen, was not given to drink of the pill lest she should beget an ill-favoured son. All queens conceived and in time gave birth to beautiful and handsome sons. A son was born to Alindā also, but that son was ugly, repulsive, thick-lipped, thick-headed, thick-footed, pot-bellied and black in appearance like ink because she also tasted a drop of water on the mill-stone with the tip of her tongue by means of a blade of kusa grass. The King, however, refused to see such a son of queen Alindā and he wanted him not to become king after his death. After, however, the death of his father, it was Kusa who with his great intelligence and reflective power successfully understood the message of his father, kept with the ministers and the latter, in consultation with the other princes, the priests, the Brahmana royal tutors, the army officers and all the people of the town and countries, made Kusa the King. After having ruled his kingdom for some time, Kusa once appealed to his mother, queen Alindā to bring him a handsome wife who was to be his chief queen. His mother told him that no one would give her handsome and lovely daughter in marriage with him because he himself was ill-favoured in beauty. So Alindā said to him that wives and husbands live together happily when they are equal in beauty for then they are not jealous of each other and that a beautiful wife reproaches an ill-favoured husband, and a handsome husband an ill-favoured wife. Hence she wanted to seek for a wife who would be suitable for her ugly son, Kusa. But the latter pressed for



marrying a beautiful wife even from a distant land at the price of gold.

Brahmanas and messengers were sent out by ministers and royal priests to find out a maiden who would be suitable for King Kusa and they in going round all provinces came to the city of Kanyakubja in the province of Surasena where a king of the Malakas named Mahendrakā, was reigning and there the Brahmanas and messengers saw the most lovely and beautiful daughter of the king, named Sudarsinā going out of the city to the park and they thought that she would be a suitable chief queen for King Kusa. They then interviewed King Mahendrakā and opened before him their proposal of marriage between King Kusa and Sudarsinā. Mahendrakā agreed to the proposal. The spokesman of the delegation of messengers then bought some sweetmeats and distributed them among themselves as a mark of celebration of the betrothal. The best maiden in the whole of Jambudvīpa they reported to the ministers and priests, had been chosen by them for King Kusa's marriage. The queen mother Alindā approved the proposal and the news was communicated to King Kusa who then with a glad heart, asked the ministers, councillors, Brahmanas, priests and royal tutors to make arrangement for fetching Sudarsinā from Kanyakubja for him and they being equipped with an army of four divisions set out with great splendour and magnificence and on reaching that city they told Mahendrakā to fulfil his promise by giving his daughter, the proposed bride, for then King Kusa. Then Mahendrakā performed the rite of giving the bride for becoming the wife of Kusa to the accompaniment of shouts of people and the beating of drums, kettle-drums, taberns and the blowing of trumpets and the members of the deputation sent from Banāras performed the rite of taking the bride and they departed home. There is no mention, however, in the Jataka story about any further solemnizing of the marriage when the bride arrived at Banāras. Even before the arrival of the bride, a king's daughter, the queen mother Alindā thought of the means by which Sudarsinā should not know what her groom, King Kusa, was like in complexion and form. She devised a way deciding to provide a dark inner chamber, plastered inside and outside, but draped

with festoons of fine cloth made fragrant with incense and strewn with garlands of flowers were on her son. Kusa could divert, enjoy and amuse him all with his wife, but both not seeing each other with their eyes. Sudarsana could not understand the reason why the bed-chamber was under dark and no lamp were lit in it. She felt sad for not knowing what her husband King Kusa was like in complexion and form, nor did according to her view. Kusa knew what Queen Sudarsana was like in complexion and form. She privately asked her husband for the reason, but Kusa replied saying that he himself did not know of this, but his mother must know this and he advised her to ask the queen-mother. Sudarsanā enquired of her mother-in-law about this matter saying that she failed to understand why in such a rich royal family such an arrangement was made of a bed-chamber where no lamps were lit day and night and they both, a husband and wife, lived together in darkness without seeing each other with their eyes. The Queen-mother replied saying—“Sudarsana, you both husband and wife are sublimely beautiful. I have seen none others like you. The object is that you should not see each other's beauty and become distraught in mind. But I have also made a covenant with the gods that you should see each other only after a long time, twelve years, after you, my daughter-in-law, have a son or daughter. This is our family custom.” अवि नु एष च मे देवानामुपपादितं चिरकालं अस्माभिः यदा मे वधूकार्यं भुवर्जनार्थं पुत्रो वा भ्राता वा भवेत् ततो हविष्यमे ब्रह्मं पश्यन् पश्चात्पश्ये । एतौस्माकं कुतश्च । 111-115. For my present purpose I need not pursue the story which ended happily by Sakee favouring King Kusa with the grant of a single rope of pearls with the *manikya* gem which when fastened on the King's head removed his bodily deformity and made him look very beautiful in complexion and fair, and which kept hidden in his dress makes him recover his original ugly form. In Indian society there was a strong belief in the influence of *manikya* gem, *nostril* in anta-tion and *oshadhi* medicinal herb, even in so early days.

We can also guess of political alliances between kings through marriage relationship. Kings are often found advised to dower daughters with thousand pieces of gold and get royal sons-in-law *jānithu* for achieving political strength.

### FOOD AND DRINK OF PEOPLE, THEIR DRESS AND ORNAMENTS

There is a clear reference in a passage (III 11) that the country-people in northern India generally fed themselves in hygienic food in powder form and were always clothed in blankets. Their food was coarse and their work was also so ('शक्यभक्षो जनपदा निरुद कम्बजपादना । लृहभूकना लृहकर्म" III 11. Rice, wheat and many other cereals are mentioned. When poor boys go out to fetch wood they used to carry for their food knapsacks containing junket, condiments, rice, ghee, solid food, meat dishes, sesamum. Confection, curds, curry, fish, fruits, ghee, ginger, honey, head-drink, meat, mustard, fragrant rice, roots, sweet meats, toddy drinks and spirits were taken by men of society according to their ranks and habit. In rich people's houses, men were served with food that was seasoned with flavours and condiments and there was plentiful meat, the flesh of hares, fish, buffaloes, young goats and sheep, cocks and peacocks, pheasants, quails, *lamak* (a kind of lobster) or quail, francolin partridges and cranes. "वराहमस्या महिषा मज्जकशावक-कुक्कुट-मयूरा । तिलिरुर्न-कलावक कपि जल मार्गस्य वि प्रभूता ॥" (III 82).

Kass silk was mostly used by rich people—men and women. Gold and silver ornaments were much in use. Gems and jewellery decorated the persons of royal families and rich men of society.

### EDUCATION AND TRAINING OF HIGH PLACED PRINCES

In order to be distinguished in life, princes and ministers' sons were given proper education and training from early ages. We learn from the *Mahavastu* that when princes reached years of discretion at the age of seven or eight they were taught reading, writing, calculation (सख्या) numeration (गणना), craft of sign manuals (पूरा), mnemonics (धारणं), riding on elephants and horses and chariots, the use of bow and the bamboo, running, racing, swimming, archery, fighting, combat, cutting, stabbing and striking, and leading an army in battle and training in kingcraft. Under royal tutors the princes and ministers' sons were given training in Vedic lore and other branches of learning.





It is a most curious claim of the Buddhist texts that the important arts and sciences were revealed for the benefit and welfare of the world by the Buddhists, i.e., the potential Buddhas—high personages blessed with good qualities of head and heart. It is stated in the *Mahāvastu* I: 134-135 that all charms (वन्त्र) and medicines (अण्ड) were discovered by them, all remedies (वैजृह) were prescribed by them, all sciences on the attainment of truth (सर्वविज्ञेयवस्तुवर्तमानि शास्त्राणि) were developed by them, all methods of mathematical calculation (सङ्ख्यागणन) and all forms of writing (सुत्रास्त्रोत्राणि) were invented by them, all kinds of scripts, such as Brāhmī, Puskariyā, the Kharoṣṭhī, the Yavani or the Ionian or the Greek, Poshpalipi, the Dardari, the Chinese, the Hūna, the Vangya, the Tramiya or Dravidian etc., were introduced by them, and even all fields of gold, silver, tin, copper, lead, precious substances and gems were revealed by them.

### BOTANICAL KNOWLEDGE

#### Trees

The Buddha, being asked by the monks as to how the Lord succeeded in leading away Saṅghatā and Maṇḍgalavāsana along with 500 monks from the pitiless heretical ways of the Parivṛtṭaka Wanderer's sects and saved them from the rounds of birth, death and old age, related the Jātaka story of the Live Hundred merchants III: 67 ff. in which, it is described that as the king of horses, named Kesi, he went from the land of Uttarakuru to the terrible sea-girt island of the Srenis (*śakha dīpa*) where they led into their hands after a ship-wreck caused by a monster fish and saved by him and led across the great ocean and set down in Jambudvīpa. In that Jātaka we observe the ship-wrecked merchants approaching the grove of the Srenis and here we find a most important enumeration of various kinds of trees, flowers, plants and creepers growing in the grove. And it gives us an idea of the good knowledge possessed by our ancient people about botany. The trees mentioned are— (1) Asoka, (2) Atimukta, (3) Champaka, (4) Priyangu, (5) Śala, (6) Ilaka, (7) Vakula, (8) Kulavavaka, (9) (bushes of) Punnaga (red amaranth) and (10) Laṣa. There were also (11), flowering, Karīra, a kind of thorny

planted upon by camels. (2) Kalatila. (3) Karamarda, (4) Jivakidaru. (5) Navamulika (a variety of jasmine), (6) Padoka (trumpet-flower). (7) Kirenu. (8) Kāvāra. (9) Varshaka or Vārshaka varieties agallochuta, (20) Kura. (21) Mullika. (22) Kuvvaka. (23) Madagan-dhika. (24) Sata Sata. (25) Tara. Tara palm-ya trees, (26) Amra. (27) Karmkora and (28) Vakuta. There were also (29) Nagavriksha. (30) Bhavya. (31) Palevata. (32) Pippala (the holy fig-tree). (33) Kapitha (wood-apple tree). (34) Varātaka. (35) Saptaparna. (36) Macchinda. (37) Sahakara. (38) Valvira (the). (39) Narikera (coconut), (40) Mochi (plantain tree). (41) Pinasa (bread-fruit). (42) Khatāra (date tree). (43) Jumbira (the lime). (44) Mitunaea citra. (45) Akshala (walnut). (46) Tamala, (47) Kamsuki, (48) Mridvika (vine) and (49) Dāhina (pon-granite). It goes without saying that some of these varieties of trees and plants cannot be identified now.

## PART II

To speak of the economic conditions is to speak on the subject called *Arth* which is defined by Kautilya as the science of agriculture (*Arth*) rearing of live stock especially cows, oxen, horses etc. (*Arth*) and trade and commerce (*Arth*). First of all we cannot forget that the *Arthashastra* of Kautilya has fully discussed some of the following economic topics viz., (1) laying out new villages and townships in the countryside. (2) settlement of untiled and uninhabitable land. (3) planning of fortified towns and forts, (4) storing of treasures by the Chancellor of the Exchequer (*samudhātā*), (5) collection of revenue by the Collector General (*samāharta*), (6) examination of jewellery and other valuables for entry into the royal coffers under the store-keeper (*kamadhyaksha*), (7) establishment of factories for mining operations under the superintendent of mines (*akamadhyaksha*), (8) the duties and functions of the Chief Superintendent of Gold (*utarnadhyaksha*), (9) commodities manufactured by the State itself (*panadhyaksha*), (10) forest products under the supervision of the *kupyadhyaksha*, (11) balances, weights and other measurements under the *manadhyaksha*, (12) collections of tolls and customs and other taxes under the *sulkyadhyaksha*,



(14) weaving under *atradhyaksha*, 15) agriculture under *atādhyaksha*, 16) liquor under *uradhyaksha*, 17) prostitutes or harlots under *śandādhyaksha*, 18) horses and fleet under *navādhyaksha*, 19) cattle, horses, elephants, chariots and foot-soldiers under *śadhyaksha* and other superintendents, 20) pasturage under *śatādhyaksha* and 21) salt business which was a state monopoly. We cannot in this connection forget the Kautilyan maxim that sale of commodities at the places of sale or factories of their production is forbidden—price to be fixed up by Government. Let us now see if we can collect from the *Mahabharata* any new and additional information about the Indian economic life of the times.

### TRADE AND SEA-FARING MERCHANTS

Hundreds of merchants used to leave Jambudvīpa—India, by setting sail on the great ocean in sea-going vessels to seek for wealth by trade. Monstrous fish often caused ship-wreck. Floats of various kinds such as jars, planks, rafts etc. are found mentioned as being used by men during the breaking up of sea-vessels. People during ship-wreck used series of bottles and *अमृतपिण्डो*. Stories of sirens on such occasions are also read in the book, who entice merchants to their own abodes and later imprison them in their strongholds. But they are sometimes, as the story goes, taken across in safety, by a fabulous horse-king, named Keshin, coming from the land of Uttarākuru, on the *Karttika purnimā* day, who reaches the ship-wrecked merchants to Jambudvīpa. Those who cannot escape are devoured by the sirens. During ship-wreck, as is natural with those who fall into such disaster, the wrecked merchants call upon the dev as they believe in—some calling on Śiva, others on Vaiṣṇava, others on Śkanda and Varuṇa, some on Yama and others on Kuvera, others again on thousand-eyed Virūdhaka and yet others on Śakra, Brahmā, Indra, and this is all for escape alive from the sea.

### TRADE IN HORSES

Many ancient kings had in their royal stable hundreds of fleet horses of Sindhu country and with trained horses from Kamboja country. These two were birth-place of



good horses. In the *Maṃs Jāla* as told in the *Mahā-astu* we read that a horse-dealer named Vyāsaśa traded on horses coming down from Takshashila even upto Banaras for selling horses.

It is very interesting to know that there occur two nearly parallel passages in the *Mahā-astu* 111-112-114 and 111-114-115 wherein we have an authoritative list of various artisans, craftsmen and guilds of tradesmen and manufacturers, prevailing in the early economic life of India. These references may serve, to a very great extent, as supplementary information to those scholars who write on Economic Life in Ancient India. The two occasions that gave rise to the insertion of such a list by the compiler or compilers of the treatise were the two receptions to Lord Buddha accorded respectively by his Father, Suddhodhana, at Kapilavastu and by King Bimbisāra at the Magadha capital, Rajagṛha, on his visits thither after his attainment of perfect enlightenment. Both the rulers wanted to get forward to greet the Lord in the company of all sorts of their subject people including the Brahmanas and the house holders. *Brahmana gṛahapaty-keṇ* and the parties of musicians *gandharika* and workers on arts and crafts *śiparāma* and the trading or commercial guilds or corporations *śreni*. A proclamation was made to that effect as order of the ministers of both these kings in various squares, quadrangles, high-road junctions and market places *śatānāṃ śatāśatāśatāpura-mukheṣu*. On hearing of this proclamation there assembled near the palace-gate *raṃṭha dāre* along with the members of the Council of hereditary ministers *kumarama-parivādān*, the military chiefs *śatāśatāgrāh*, the Brahmanas with the Royal Priest at the head *purahitapramukhā brahmanā*, the people of the trade centres, i.e., the merchant people with their chief the *śreṣṭhina* at the head *śreṣṭhipramukha negama* or *vaṇi-grāma* and other trading people with their caravan-chief at the head *śreṣṭhāśapramukhā vaṇi-grāma* and the eighteen kinds of *śreni* or guilds. It may be remarked in passing that the words *śreṣṭhin* *śrīṭha* *īṭha* and *kumaramāṭha* in these passages of the *Mahā-astu* remind us of their occurrence in the Damodarpur copper-plate documents of the Gupta period discovered by us in North Bengal nearly 43 years ago,



The passages under reference contain a list of three large categories of trading-people as follows:

*Category I*—The *Gātharitas* (musicians and players on various musical instruments)—

- 1 *chakrapa* (the discus-holders or wheel-players, who exhibit tricks by discus or wheel);
- 2 *antika* (the court minstrels whose duty is to awaken kings, princes or chiefs, & cheer them with music and song);
- 3 *nata* (the actors or jugglers);
- (4) *nartaka* (the dancers);
- (5) *vila* (the players of a particular instrument, or emblem-players, prize-fighters, drummers if the reading be *ghalla*);
- (6) *malla* (the athletes, wrestlers, performers of gymnastic exercises);
- 7 *pāṇasārika* or *pāṇasārika* (the players of musical instruments through hands or the palm-strikers, the players clapping their palms);
- 8 *vibhika* (clowns wearing decorations, jugglers if the reading be *saubhika*);
- (9) *tantrika* (tumblers doing acrobatic feats, performers of leaping, jumping or mounting exercises by means of bamboos and ropes);
- 10 *kumbhastanika* (has the word anything to do with players with jars and quivers?);
- 11 *udumbaka* (exhibitors of pendulous hanging or oscillating exercises, if the reading be *udumbaka*, the meaning is performers of imitations);
- 12 *distrika-bhāṇika* (meaning obscure—perhaps the word is *distrika-bhāṇika*—a kind of reciters or proclaimers who amuse others by uttering the same thing in two or three sounding ways);
- 13 *pañcānataka* (obscure—perhaps players playing with five young chaps);
- (14) *gāyanaka* (singers);
- 15 *bandhaka* (players of a musical instrument called *bandha*, or those given to buffooneries);
- 16 *bhettasankha-mridanga-patanaka* (music-players through kettle-drums, conches or trumpets, tabors and war-drums);

- (17) *tinata panata-ranu-saliati-ekadatt-itad-iddaka* (players on the musical instruments called *tinata* meaning obscure, *panata* small drum or tabour, *ranu* flutes or pipes, *ekadatt* a kind of lute or guitar, *ekadatt* Is it any on stringed instrument? and *itad* the famous Indian lute and many other *saliata* players on musical instruments);
- (18) *gana-vira* those who play with ropes;
- (19) *tesa* i.e. performers of *hinda* or frantic or violent dance of Siva;
- (20) *chetra-ka* obscure does it mean men who can produce emotions in others' mind by words or gestures? , and
- (21) *ganika* harlots or courtesans who used to attend these parties of musicians.

Category II—The *Stemi*—the corporate bodies of traders, or guilds of industrial manufacturers—

1. *raucanika* goldsmiths ,
2. *Amamnika* dealers in gold, silver and other precious metals i.e. the bullion dealers, according to some awayers of gold etc. ,
3. *pradrika* makers of cloaks, or cloak-dealers ,
4. *manapa-tanaka* gem-setters, *pradrika*, dealers in precious stones, jewelers ,
5. *man-dara* jewellers or lapidaries, gem engravers ,
6. *namdhaka* makers of conch-shed articles ,
7. *sanatara* makers of ivory articles, ivory carvers ,
8. *gatha* i.e. performers ,
9. *karika* workers in silk worms? ,
10. *tanika* oil-manufacturers, oilmen ,
11. *ghritakandaka* dealers in ghee or clarified butter in pots ,
12. *gandaka* i.e. *gandaka* dealers in molasses or runis ,
13. *tanaka* probably dealers of vessels for holding spirituous liquors ,
14. *Aspa-ka* cotton-dealers ,
15. *dazanka* dealers in coagulated or sour milk, or curd ;
16. *pupika* cake-makers ,
17. *Asandakata* makers of candied sugar ,
18. *modakakata* sweet-meat makers, confectioners ,



- (19, *kāṇḍaka* 'kāṇḍaka', cane or reed workers, or arrow-makers);
- 20) *śamīśakāra* 'śamīśakāra' growers of wheat flour,
- (21) *śaktikāra* or *śaktikāra* makers of barley flour, or flour of other bread-corn or cereals,
- 22) *pharaṇya* traders or dealers in fruits,
- 23) *mūlāṇya* dealers in plant roots,
- 24) *churnakutta* powder makers, those doing pulverizing work);
- 25) *gandhātaka* dealers in perfumed oils,
- 26) *attacāya* dealers in or sellers of beaded roots,
- 27) *śrīṇāṇya* meaning obscure,
- (28) *abhidhaka* perhaps perforators pore-makers or metal drillers);
- (29) *gudapāchaka* cookers of raw sugar or molasses or treacles);
- (30) *khaṇḍapāchaka* cookers of sugar candies,
- 31) *śunthika* vendors in dry ginger,
- 32) *śikhaṇḍaka* makers of rum, or distilled spirit,
- 33) *madhukāra* honey-gatherers, or makers of intoxicating drinks or wines);
- (34) *śaṅkhaṇḍaka* (sugar-merchants or dealers in refined sugar), and such other *vyavahārika* business men.

*Category III* — The *śūpāyātana* the artisans and craftsmen

- 1) *lohaṇḍaka* blacksmith,
- 2) *tāmraṇḍaka* copper smith,
- 3) *śukraṇḍaka* goldsmiths, also probably makers of gold coins named *śūka*,
- 4) *śaṅkhaṇḍaka* meaning obscure, shakers of gold dust? If the reading be *śaṅkhaṇḍaka*, it may mean makers of wooden bowls,
- (5) *prathīpaka* *prathīpaka*, *prathīpaka* 'manufacturers of articles by means of blowing pipes',
- (6) *roṣṇa* *roṣṇa*, testers of precious metals by rubbing them on touch stones,
- 7) *śaṅkhaṇḍaka* tin smiths,
- 8) *śaṅkhaṇḍaka* makers of lead sheets,
- 9) *śaṅkhaṇḍaka* makers of tools and instruments,
- (10) *śaṅkhaṇḍaka* garland makers, flutes,



- (11) *punnalāṭṭaka* 'obscure' if taken as *punnalāṭṭaka* it may mean 'vendors of betel leaves';
- (12) *kumbhakāra* (potters);
- (13) *chermakara* dealers in leather and hide goods (tanners shoe-makers);
- 14 *kāṇḍakara* oven makers, boiler makers?
- 15 *van — ka* weavers of woollen threads
- (16) *vetathastanti — ta* weavers of coats of mail,
- (17) *sakṣa-sajaka* (divers);
- 18 *de — dī — ta — tta — aya* makers of robes for deities or idols;
- (19) *charuṭṭhaka* washers of garments, laundriesmen,
- (20) *rajaka* (washermen);
- 21 *śuchika* probably *śuchika* or *śaṇḍhika* tailors or workers in embroidery with needles);
- 22 *tantrādya* cloth weavers
- (23) *tula — a — a* cotton spinners or weavers,
- 24 *chitrakāra* or *chitrakāraka* painters,
- 25 *śaṭṭhaka — upakaraṭ — t* carpenters and carvers of images, or portrait-makers);
- 26 *kā — a — p — i — ka* *kā — a — p — i — ka*? resin or pitch-makers,
- 27 *peṭṭhaka* or *p — la — ka* beautifiers? one reading is *śeḍḍhaka* lotusmen workers? some suggest the reading as *peṭṭhāraka* basket makers);
- 28 *puṭṭhakaraka* or *puṭṭhaka* transcribers of books or manuscripts, copyists);
- 29 *puṭṭhakaraka — ka* plasterers, model-makers in plastic substance or workers in clay, wood or metal?;
- (30) *adipata* leaders
- 31 *kā — p — i — ka* *kā — p — i — ka* toilet makers, hair dressers,
- 32 *chhedaka* wood cutters or mowers of crop-plants or grames);
- (33) *lepaka* brick layers or plasterers, masons,
- (34) *thapata — uttaratara — ka* architects and carpenters,
- 35 *upakara — thakāṇḍaka* store keepers of agricultural products, keepers of granaries,
- 36 *kupakṭhaka* well-diggers or according to some, miners
- 37 *marikkāṇḍaka* earth-carrying labourers,
- 38 *kā — hitharadhaka* wood-carrying labourers, the reading *kā — hitharāṇḍaka* is better, meaning wood merchants,



- (39) *śīṇaśāyī* (dealers in straw and straw-made articles ;
- (40) *śaṭkalatānī* (bark-merchants);
- (41) *śāmbhāṇī* (dealers in grass and shrubs ;
- (42) *śāmbhāṇī* bamboo-merchants ;
- (43) *nāṭikā* boatmen or sailors ;
- (44) *adūpika* or *alūpika* raftsmen or those crossing a river etc. by means of rafts);
- (45) *ucāmadhāvaka* (workers clearing gold-dust by washing away dirt); and
- (46) *māṭhika* crushers, grinders or breakers—*māṭhika* not a happy reading in this context for it means tricksters, sharpers, cheats or rogues (a dishonest occupation).

From the above lists in the *Arthaśāstra* containing 101 items we can have a splendid idea of the economic condition of the people in early period of Indian history.

### III Religious Aspect

To speak of anything about the religious aspect of the Indian people of the *Mahāyāna* period is to tell us mostly on the prevailing *dharma* or Buddhism at the time. As I referred to in my first lecture that the *Mahāyāna* contains mostly all the important episodes of the Buddha's life and teachings and also some of his Jataka stories, and and now, so in this my last lecture I shall deal only with some particular topics on religious matters believed by the *Mahāyāna* period people for one can hardly expect to deal with all topics exhaustively in one lecture.

I have hinted before that the *Mahāyāna* is by itself a pre-eminently religious treatise at the initial stage of Mahāyāna Buddhism. So I wish first to give you briefly my impression of the nature of the influence of Mahāyāna on the poet-philosopher Asvaghosha's mind while he was depicting the life and career of Gautama Buddha in his famous Sanskrit epics, the *Buddhacharita*, the *Saundarananda* and his drama discovered in fragments—the *Sariputta prakarana*.

Asvaghosha is regarded by scholars as one of the earliest exponents of Mahāyāna Buddhism. In order to enable us to understand the *Mahāyāna* tenets I give below some of the Mahāyāna ideas that can be traced in the books of this great Buddhist teacher and writer. We find explicit and implicit reference to— 1. the stress laid on Buddha *bhakti*, the Master being an object of devotion and worship to His devotees, 2. the deification of Buddha who should be regarded as a god above all gods, as it is thought by the Mahāyānists that Gautama Buddha is the *rūpa-kāya*, material body, or *nirmāṇa-kāya*, created body, of the real Buddha, 3. the Bodhisattva's glory almost too delicate to be borne, as his mother Māyā-devī died soon after his birth, being unable to bear the excess of joy on account of the glory of the son, 4. the excessive use of the miraculous element in the legends and episodes of the Bodhisattva's career, examples of which are copious even in the *Mahāyāna*, 5. the importance of thinking about the



vanity of existence, renunciation and abandonment of all desires and cravings, and firm resolve of the Bodhi-sattva to attain *parinirvāṇa*—emancipation from individual existence—by causing extinction of all rebirths and transcending the world as *duḥṣra*—transient or impermanent. 6. the dedication of the Bodhisattva's life in his several existences, as also illustrated in the Jataka stories, to the service and welfare of humanity, the being anxious to deliver the distressed world from the sea of misery by means of his rich of knowledge,

7. the relation of some of the Bodhi-mūla-*śūkyas* thoughts and practices, specially performance of severe austerities and sacrifices of different kinds, as He thought that *apṛiṭṭi-dharma* was quite a different thing from *prā-rtha-dharma*, and 8. the gradual development of the *anātma-śāstra* and *śūnyatā*—both *prajñā-śūnyatā* and *dharma-śūnyatā* i.e. the non-existence not only of any *ātman* or *prajñā* or individuality, but also of the objective world, the main idea being that the *kṣhetrajñā* or the individual soul always remains *prā-rtha-dharma* and *bhāṇa-dharma* and cannot totally discard the tread of *saṃsāra*, *karma*, and *trai-lōka* and attain the state of *akṣara*.

The above Mahayana ideas will be partly illustrated in my discourse on similar and other points as called by me from my study of the *Mahāvastu*. But yet before doing the same I cannot but offer certain other preliminary remarks on the great Gautama Buddha's personality and the philosophical atmosphere in His time prevailing in India. It must be acknowledged that the early Buddhist schools—*Sāhāyana* and non-*Brāhmanā*, first acquired the Vedic lore including that of the Upanishadic doctrines, because without a good knowledge of those it is difficult to understand properly the Buddha and Buddhism. Why did the Buddha rebel against Brāhmanic Hinduism and how far did he differ from the tenets and doctrines of the Vedic religion and Upanishadic philosophy? These are questions which cannot be fully answered in this lecture, but may occasionally be referred to in a critical mood. But it may be remarked that the Buddha was a dynamic personality. He was universal love, kindness, and perfect wisdom personified. Being a great rationalist in philosophical thoughts and conceptions, He always appealed to reason—*mukṛ*—while analysing human ventures in search



for the ultimate Truth (*tathā* or *tathatā* or Reality). The whole world regards him as a great master of moral force, a great renouncer, and a supreme physician for healing human diseases of passions and torments. For a long period of the philosophical atmosphere which the Buddha found himself in at his own time. The chief religious and philosophical system that prevailed in our country in pre-Buddhist age was that of the Upanishads and therein we observe an emphasis being put on knowledge (*jñāna*) than on actions or works (*karma*) such as the Vedic ritualistic institutions including performance of sacrifices (*yajña*) in which sacrificial slaughter of animals was involved. Even in Buddha's own time these ceremonies did not fully cease to work on people's mind, though the first impact on Vedic *karmakānda* inflicted by the Upanishadic spiritual teachings had commenced to be felt somewhat earlier. The revolt against such *karma* came, however, to have a powerful influence on men's mind when the Buddha began to preach his system after his attainment of perfect enlightenment or *nirvāṇa* in his thirty-fifth year. But in this revolt against the Brahmanic cult of ritualistic *karma* the Ājīvika, the Sākyanths, the Jains, and the Lokasāyaka schools of philosophy which were current in Buddha's own time joined their hands to a great extent. It is known that the Ājīvika sect of which Gosāla Mankhadiputra was the founder believed in the doctrine of *naiṣṭika*—predestination or fate—according to which all phenomena—physical or mental—are unalterably fixed or ordained, and the members of this sect cherished no faith in human efforts or exertions (*puruṣaśakāra*). The Jaina sect founded on a strong basis by the great Mahāvira accepted harmlessness or abstinence from violence or doing injury to others in thought, word or deed. The third chief leader, contemporary of the Buddha, was *Keśakambhin*, a materialist and unbeliever in God or Soul and probably inclined to the Lokasāyaka system of Charvāka in which also we find its adherents rejecting the authority of the Vedas and refraining from performing all the Brāhmanic ceremonials and sacrifices and also denying the doctrine of transmigration and salvation acknowledged by the Brahmanic systems. To these materialists matter only counted, and soul was understood by them to be body with only the



attribute of intelligence. *Tejasaśa*. They also denied the existence of all that transcends the senses and salvation to them was only the dissolution of the body which was nothing but a combination of the gross elements. Orthodox Hinduism received a severe handling from the Lokayatas, and the early Paddhist. There was another prominent religious leader in Buddha's time—a Brahmin preacher, named Sanjaya, the head of the Purohita sect, who had for his disciples both Śīrputra and Mānugayana before their complete renunciation and ordination to Buddhism, and their becoming two most famous, beloved and devoted disciples of the Buddha. This Sanjaya was rather a sceptic, cherishing doubt in the solution of the philosophical problems, such as whether the world is permanent or transitory, whether there is continuity of life or self after a man's death, whether the world has its beginning or it is beginningless, etc. To the Gautama Buddha the above-mentioned sectarian tenets and doctrines seemed to be unsatisfactory, unsoundable and unappealing though they severally made strong impression on his mind in some respects.

Against this background I wish now to draw a picture of some religious topics discussed and referred to in the great *Mahāvastu-sūtra*. First I take up the subject of repudiation of Brahminical sacrifices, austerities and penances. Once in the topic of conversation by Buddha of Śrāvastī King Bimbisāra, ruling both in Magadha and Anga jointly from his capital at Rājagṛha III. 100 ff., when the Master after having been perfectly enlightened was staying at Uruvilva, at the foot of the Gṛthirāśa *Asoka's* Banyan tree on the banks of the Naraṇjina river, we find Uruvilva-Kāśyapa being asked by the Lord as to why he had abandoned the sacred fire-sacrifice, austerities and penances. Kāśyapa said in reply that in a sacrifice 'men speak of food and drink, and sweets of sensual pleasures and even women, but he knows of what is dress among attachments and he therefore took no delight in sacrifice and offering'. Then on Buddha's enquiry as to what better thing in the world of devas and men on

\* "अन्नानि वानानि अथो रमानि, कामां स्त्रियो चाभिवदन्ति यत्ते ।

एतं धर्मं न उपयोषु शक्या, तस्मान्न यत्ते न दुर्गे रमासि ॥" III. 411

which his heart was set Kasyapa replied saying that when he had seen the Lord, Sri, in the tree from all substrate of re-birth, possessing nothing and of all attachments to existence, unchanging and not led by others, then he lost all delight in sacrifice and offering. He then repented that he previously did offer the tree sacrifice and made his penance in vain and that he foolishly believed that man could be freed by tree sacrifice and offerings and that he, being unable to see the perfect unmovable state, had blindly followed after birth and death. He then added that the Lord having clearly revealed to him the pure, perfect and complete state, he had been able to escape from the round of birth and death. He also stated that so long he was bound in the chains of wrong belief from which the Exalted One had now set him free. Many men, he said, were lost through performance of diverse austerities as they could not pass beyond doubt. The Brahmanas and householders of Magadha then realized that Uruvilva Kasyapa was really living the *brahmacharya* life under the recluse, Gautama Buddha.

Such repudiation of Vedic sacrifices which commenced so strongly from the time of Buddha later found an echo in some of the edicts of Asoka in which the emperor showed abundant respect for the sanctity of life and raised a strong inducement against the slaughter of animals for sacrifice *andāmbha* of *prāṇa*. The *Mahāvastu* expressed such a repudiation in a story III. 445 ff. which briefly runs thus:—there was a king named Suchandanta ruling at Sinhapura (perhaps in the Punjab) and he was very friendly with his neighbouring king, named Sobhita, of Hastināpura. Suchandanta once prepared for the performance of a great sacrifice *mahāyajña* in which he wanted to offer every kind of animal, living on land and in water. At his command the hunters and fishermen of his kingdom brought all sorts of living beings—the land animals being shut up in a large enclosure (*pinarāṭa*) and the fishes confined in a tank. The king also managed to obtain a beautiful Kinnari named Manoharā daughter of Drūmya the King of Kinnaray from the Kāvasa mount,

\* "बुद्धो मुनिः ज्ञानमनुपूर्विक, अकिञ्चनं सर्वप्रवेद्यसर्वतः।

अनन्ययामावधमन्यजेत्, तस्माच्च वष्टे न दुःखे रमामि" III. 445.



caught by a hunter and brought to Sanhapura, a city of Brahmanas and put in the sacrificial enclosure. Invitation to the sacrifice was issued to king Subahu of Hastinapura and several hundred other kings. King Subahu sent to the sacrifice his only son, named Sudhama, as his representative.

This prince Sudhama saw in the sacrificial enclosure many thousands of living beings, both land and water animals, as well as the Kinnari, Manohari. On the prince's asking for the reason of confining so many living beings in the sacrificial enclosure, king Suchandrama answered saying, "With these animals I shall perform a sacrifice and there will thus be plenty of solid and soft food" ("एतद्भि यन्नं यन्नित्थ्यामि, एतेन च प्रभूतेन कार्दवीय-भोजनोत्थेन").

Then follows a harsh criticism of sacrifice made by Sudhama who sharply asked Suchandrama as to whether any good and profit would accrue from such a sacrifice which consists in slaughtering all those living beings. The Brahmanic way of reply of king Suchandrama in praise of such a sacrifice was this:—

"All these living beings that will be slaughtered in the sacrifice will attain heaven. As regards myself I shall be re-born in heaven as many times as are equal to the number of the slaughtered animals."

Prince Sudhama replied in a Buddhistic mood saying<sup>1</sup> that—

"Your Majesty, this is not so, this is a wrong view. *mithyā-dṛṣṭi* for, *ahimsa*—not to cause harm or injury—is the highest rule. To take life is not *dharma* but to abstain from taking life is *dharma*. Wrong belief is not *dharma*, but right belief is *dharma*."

The Prince then added saying—Your Majesty, those who take to the path of the ten right actions, *kuśala-karma*, are re-born in heaven. In the matter of the great sacrifice, the path followed by your Majesty is not the path

<sup>1</sup> "एते यत्तका प्राणजालो अन्नं यज्ञं हनित्थ्यामि तत्तको वारां स्वर्गं वप्सिष्यामि ।

अहं च यत्तका एते प्राणा एत्थं यज्ञे हनित्थ्यामि तत्तको वारां स्वर्गं उपपत्स्यामि"

II. 99.

<sup>2</sup> महाराज न एव एत, मिथ्यादृष्टि एवा, अहिंसा परमं धर्मं ।

प्राणातिपातो अयमर्थो, प्राणातिपातसंन्यसो धर्मो . . . मिथ्यादृष्टि अयमर्थो मय्यादृष्टि धर्मो . . . इदं हि कुशलं हि कर्मपरं हि सचन्वागताः तस्मा स्वर्गोपपद्यन्ति । तदेव महाराजेन न एव स्वर्गार्था ययो गृहीतो, नरकेषु ममनाय एव ययो गृहीतो" II. 99



to heaven, but it is the path that leads to hell. Sa-handama, the other kings and the great mass of people present in the function were pleased to hear this exposition of the *dharma* by prince Sudhanu. The result was that the king of Simhapura let out all the living being—both the land and water animals. Such was the Bodhi-forest decreed against sacrifices in the *Mahāvastu*. As instructed by prince Sudhanu, king Sa-handama of Simhapura ordered an unimpeded and flawless sacrifice in which thousands of Śramanas, Brahmanas, poor people and suppliants were fully given food and drink and were clothed in good garments. Doing so he proved that such kind of service was the proper sacrifice of *tapas*.

### THE ORDINATION OF SĀRĪPUTRA AND MAUDGALYAYANA

The most important topic of the conversion of Sāriputra and Maudgalyayana as described and discussed in the *Mahāvastu*, which also contains the stories of many other ordinations, is related here for a clear knowledge of the processes of such conversions held by the early Buddhists. The Buddha whose missionary career was just begun, was living after his return from Bharuk, in the precincts of the Magadhan capital, Rājagṛha. The conversion story of these two great disciples of the Buddha as depicted in the Pali book differs to some extent from the one told in the *Mahāvastu* in certain details. In the Nālandā grounds, a very prosperous and developed village, situated within half a *yāna* from Rājagṛha, there lived a very rich Brāhmana who had a beautiful and charming wife named Sārī. She bore seven sons, the youngest of whom was named Upasāhya (उपसह्य) and a student of Vedic *mantra* in his preceptor's home (गृहगुरु). In another such rich, prosperous and populous village named Kōṭṭa-grāma, situated also within half a *yāna* of Rājagṛha, there lived another Brāhmana of great affluence, who had a son named Kōṭṭa, very pure, learned, skilful and intelligent. He also read Vedic scriptures in the same *gṛham*, where they both had five hundred fellow-students. Upasāhya and Kōṭṭa were the surnames of Sāriputra and Maudgalyayana respectively. These two young Brāhmanas were very happy and close friends and



they exchanged constant visits between their two native villages. Their teacher's name was Saṃjaya (Varaṇaputra) belonging to the Parivṛāka sect. Once the two friends went to see the *Uśvaghāṣṇagṛha*, the annual festival in which hundreds of shows, choruses, dancers, actors and dreamers join in merriment. But as both Upatiśya and Koṭa had now acquired all the attributes entitling them for initiation into the doctrine of all the previous Saṃvāk Saṃbuddhas—perfectly Enlightened Ones—and also attained power to understand the causes of all things and become fit for the performance of all *Āśvadharmā* injunctions in this their last birth ("आयं धर्मज्ञः आराधनार्थं वरमभवि कार्त्तव्यं हेतुप्रत्ययकारिका सत्या" II 111-57), there arose, after seeing the sights in the festival and also the crowd of people assembled there, in the mind of Śāriputra (Upatiśya) the conception of the impermanence of the world, this transient existence, and also in the mind of Maudgalyāyana (Koṭa) the conception of all things being nothing but bones. In spite of his associate's request to Śāriputra that he should not feel sorry at this time of gladness and merriment in the *vanas*, Śāriputra replied saying that that was rather the time to live by *dharma*. These people, according to him, were attached to worldly objects of enjoyment which are fleet and they, with their greedy desires unsatiated, forget that they will very soon have to depart from the world and be reduced to ashes. So he advocated to Maudgalyāyana that the course of renunciation was his desired objective. On hearing this said, Koṭa promised to adopt the same path as his friend wanted to traverse, and he uttered a verse which states—'The way you prefer appeals to me also, and even death is more welcome to me by remaining in your company than life without yourself' ("या गतो भवती इष्टा भग्माकस्य रोचते : स्वयां मार्गं मृतं भव न च जीवितं स्वयां विना" II 111-59). So both of them proceeded to the grove of the Parivṛākas and received there from Saṃjaya the vow of renunciation—*parivṛāka-pratītyā*. Śāriputra was able to master all the lore of the Parivṛākas within one week since his *ptarāya* and Maudgalyāyana did so within a fortnight. The two friends then discussed between themselves thus—'This *dharma* (of the Parivṛākas) cannot lead us to emancipation or cessation of all this. So we should independently try to

acquire *dharmam* (well-preached discipline of the *dharma*) that may conduce to the end of all miseries." They then stipulated between themselves that whoever of the two would first attain *dharmam*, he should communicate the same to the other, so that they would together renunciate the world by being initiated to *Avyadharmavaya*. They then entered the city of Rāṣṭradātya different at ways. At that time Lord Gaṇḍhara was residing with a retinue of 6,500 *Bodhisattvas* in the Bamboo Grove at Kalandakanivāpa. Śāriputra beheld from a distance the venerable monk named Upasena, not Avajit as in Pāli books, proceeding in search of food with his begging bowl, wearing his yellow robe. He felt highly contented in mind at the sight of the monk and considered this mendicant's wandering in renunciation is a blessed thing. [II] 60. He asked Upasena saying thus— "Are you, venerable Sir, a teacher, *guru*, or a disciple, hearer, *śiṣya*?" Forthwith came the reply— "I am a disciple." Śāriputra then enquired thus— "Would you kindly tell me as to what doctrine or tenet your own teacher follows, and what does he say to and instruct his disciples, and whether his exhortations have spread far and wide?" Upasena wanted to tell Śāriputra only the real significant portion, *anvamaṇa*, of his Master's teaching, as he was himself a man of better learning, *āpavita*. The questioner also desired to know the spirit, *artha*, and not the form, *vyākaraṇa*, of the teachings, because he and many others had long deceived themselves by merely unmeaning words of scriptural books. Upasena also told Śāriputra that his Master taught people about all *dharma*s or phenomena as depending on a Law of Causation, and instructed them to abandon all desired objects— *पश्येदममृतमस्मिन् पश्येत् कल्याणमनं ज्ञानं उपायाय प्रति- निवर्गं विवर्तयति*" [II] 61. On hearing this, Śāriputra's mind at once became clear of all impurities and his pure spiritual eye opened up, and he at once attained *dharma*, threw off false views, *prahita-dṛṣṭi*, overcame all doubts, *jāna-kamkṣā*, discontinued questionings, *agata-kathamkatha*, came to possess an upright kind and diligent mind, *anuchitta, mridu-chitta, karma-niyata*, and acquired premonition and aim towards *nirvāṇa*, the eternal blissful state— *nirvāṇa-pravāna, nirvāṇa-pragbhāra*. Upasena then directed Śāriputra towards Kalandaka nivāpa at Venavāna where the Master was at that time residing

and himself went on his way round in the city of Rājagṛha. But Śāriputra went first to Maudgalyāyana who saw his associate coming towards him with a calm and serene countenance and who ejaculated saying "O you, Śāriputra, it appears you have attained *amṛta*—that immortal state of bliss, and also the path that leads to it—*amṛtamadhiḡatanam amṛtagāmanichā maraḥ*" III. 61—and this is why you look so doubly bright and effulgent"—You are right in your guess, I have really attained *amṛta* and the path that leads to it—There has arisen the Light of the world—*Loka-pradyota*—thus replied Śāriputra—Maudgalyāyana then enquired from his associate about what the Teacher teaches—Śāriputra answered and said

“वे धर्मा हेतुप्रभवा हेतुत्तेषां तपान्नमो ब्राह्म ।

तेषां च यो निरोध एववादी महाभरत ” II III. 62

i.e., “The Tathagata has proclaimed the cause and also the cessation of all things or phenomena which are born of causes. The Great Stramana is the holder of such a doctrine.” On hearing this uttered by his comrade, Maudgalyāyana also attained his spiritual eye—*dharma-chakṣuḥ*—and felt himself fit for the attainment of *nirvāṇa*. He was told also of the whereabouts of the Master—Maudgalyāyana wanted not to take leave of their former preceptor, Sañjaya, saying that they should go direct to the Master and not see any more Sañjaya with his corrupt view. But Śāriputra reminded his associate that they must see him before they proceed to live the religious life under Gautama, the Great Recluse, as their previous preceptor had done them a great service since through him they had given up the householders' life. So they both went to Sañjaya who requested them not to leave him, and the five hundred disciples of his—belonging to the Parivrajaka sect. But they told their former preceptor that they intended to take ordination from Lord Gautama who had witnessed directly what is called *dharma-vinaya* and propagated the same to all quarters. They, as seekers after true faith, could not disbelieve Him. To the extreme regret of Sañjaya his five hundred followers also left that sect and went away with Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana. Buddha intuitively knew that they both were coming to Him with the five hundred wanderers and the Tathagata declared that one of the two



meaning Śrīputra would be the leading monk among the great intellectuals and the other meaning Maudgalyāyana the leading monk among those who possess supernatural powers. "एको अदो महाप्राज्ञाना भवरो अदो महद्भिकानाम्" III 63.

Śrīputra saw Lord Buddha from a distance teaching the pure and perfect *dharma* to a large crowd looking endowed with the eighteen special supernatural powers *āśenka*, the ten powers *bala* and the four expertnesses *varuṇaśay*, with his faculties and mind controlled a veritable second rising sun, a exposure of all eyes like one crossing over to the shore of emancipation and securing all bliss a Śramana beyond evil a Brāhmin a Śrotriya a learned man and a *śālistha* a student who has concluded his studies. Such was the glorified state in which the Lord was seen by Śrīputra. Then the great new comers accompanied by the five hundred followers approached the Buddha and bowed their heads at his feet. Śrīputra addressed the Lord thus: "O Ascetic, we have so long dwelt as it were in waters of the ocean, in caves of hills and in glides and wood. Through lack of sight of yourself in person, we have long lived among false heretics. O you the great Caravan leader, now having receded from the wrong path we have crossed over in faith to your way and having traversed the wilderness of worldly life have become wise and passionless and are no longer moved by attachment." Both Śrīputra and Maudgalyāyana then begged of Lord Sugata to admit them as recluses. "प्रव्रजामु यो भगवानुपमवाहेतु मां मुगलो III 64 65 and ordain them. The Lord then ordained them both and the five hundred other Wanderers by uttering the formula of "Come, monks" ("एहिभिक्षुकाये आभावे" III 65) and also "Come, monks, live the religious life under the Panchagati" "एष भिक्षव चरन् न्यागते ब्रह्मचर्यम्" III 65. Then the miracle took place of all their marks, badges, emblems and sign of wanderers having disappeared and of the appearance of the three

"उचितं सागरमनिले उचितं परिग्रहणकाननवनेषु ।

अवर्जितात् तुह्य मुने उचिता स्म चिर कुतश्चेषु ॥

कुमार्या निवृत्ता यथे ते प्रसज्जा महासायकाः प्रतीकाः ।

त तन्मारकान्सारमुत्तीर्ष्य धीराः विरक्ता न रमन्ति भूयः" ॥ III. 64



robes and bowls and their hair in its natural state of recluses, and their deportment then became so established as if they were all monks ordained a hundred years. This is the special form of renunciation *prazna* ordination *apramāda* and entry into the monk's status *dhikṣu-bhāva* of these two great men and their company of five hundred wanderers.

After this formal ordination Śāriputra put forward some metaphysical queries in reply to which the Master said that four *dhatu*, constituent parts of a being, are predicted about, they exist, disappear and re-appear by a new birth. In reply to further queries the Lord said that *maññi* ignorance, *trishṇā* desire or craving, and *kamma* action are the causes of birth, *āyā*, time, *kamma* work and *āhāra* food are the causes of existence. Disappearance or death is caused by the termination of time, the end of actions and the elimination of food, a being's rebirth is caused by non-escape from ignorance, and by domination exercised by desire which leads actions to ripen. The cessation of rebirths takes place only when a being escapes from ignorance, and succeeds in totally annihilating his desires.

The Master also explained to Śāriputra how pleasurable sensations are produced in the sense-organs by the so-called attractive appearance of object-forms. He again referred to the law of causation<sup>1</sup> as producing all phenomena which cause mental pleasure and happiness and which are then said to be born, to exist, to develop and to become cognizable. But they are, according to him, all non-soul, nor do they partake of anything belonging to any soul, rather they are bereft of any soul, nor do they partake of anything belonging to any soul, rather they are bereft of any soul nor anything belonging to any soul.

On hearing this discourse of the Master the two great new converts and their followers became absolutely free from

<sup>1</sup>“वे जगद्वृक्ष धर्मो प्रकृत्य उदयवसन्ति प्रोतिमुत्पत्तिमवस्यं इन्द्रियाणि च प्रोणवन्ति ते जगद्वृक्ष धर्मो जाता भूता रुक्मता वेदविता प्रकृत्य समुत्पन्ना वैवाह्या नैवावनीया कूष्मा आग्नेय वा अतिवनीयेन वा”। III. 66

all miseries, i.e., sans passions and desires *arā-a-*. Maudgalvāyana acquired within a week of his ordination all supernatural powers *iddhi-bala* and *madā-a-va* and the four kinds of logical dexterities *prā-ara-va* i.e., expertness in the Buddhist theory and practice, etymology and dialectics. Sariputra also acquired within a fortnight of his ordination, the power of intuitive knowledge *abhijñā*, perfection of wisdom *prajñā-prāṇa* and the four logical dexterities. Maudgalvāyana became able to realize the three knowledges *ajñā*—obtained a divine eye *divyam chak-hu-* and began to recollect his former lives *purāṇa-a-* and attained destruction of all passions and desires *arā-a-kāra-*. Such is the tradition and the two saints and their followers, after ordination by the Buddha, succeeded in crossing over the deep forest of birth, decay, death and re-birth. A few words may be said in this connection about the ordination of Mahā-Kāśyapa. Once upon a time Ānanda, the sage of Vidha, the favourite disciple of the Lord, who was regarded by all monks and nuns as the Lord's servant, attendant and recipient of all right rules of conduct direct from the Lord, was touring Magadha accompanied by a large body of five hundred monks and stayed in the Bamboo Grove at Kalandakamvāpa, some of whom betrayed their faith and renounced Ānanda's teaching. This conduct of the renouncers came to the notice of Mahā-Kāśyapa who sought leave of Ānanda to ask him the question as to why the Lord prohibited *śrā-ka-* (disciples) from eating in a crowd *gaṇi-bhōjana* and prescribed that they should eat in groups of three *tri-ka-bhōjana*. Ānanda replied that he and others had come from far away, so he himself was anxious to ask him the same question for its clear interpretation. Mahā-Kāśyapa replied that the Lathā-gata made such prohibition for two reasons—the safety of families and breaking of cliques of wicked men—thus avoiding mischief of dispute, wrangling, squabbling and quarrelling in the *Saṅgha*. In course of this talk between the two great *theras*, Mahā-Kāśyapa made a pungent remark that Ānanda acted like a youngster, knowing no moderation and like destroying a good harvest he went the rounds of families for alms along with such a big body of young and fresh troops of fellow students newly ordained, having no guard on the



doors of their senses, not vigilant and irresponsible. Ānanda resented the remark by saying that there were grey hairs growing on his head and yet Mahā-Kāśyapa thought it fit to address him as to a youngster. At that time a woman, Sthūlananda by name, championed Ānanda against Mahā-Kāśyapa who, she remarked, formerly belonged to another sect. The sage told Ānanda that this sister nun poked fun at thoughtlessness and that Ānanda begged pardon of the virgin for womankind was witless and lacking in knowledge of proper occasion to speak in that way. Mahā-Kāśyapa then reminded Ānanda in protest that he never acknowledged before embracing religious life any master outside of and other than Lord Tathagata the perfect Buddha and he referred to his renouncing his home with its rich material properties of high earthly value which he regarded as deliriums. He said, moreover, that he left home taking only an patched cotton cloak with him and wandered out in quest of Arhans in the world and at that time there was no other Arhan anywhere except the perfect Puddha and after one year of his leaving home he saw the Lord in Rājagṛha at Bahuputraka shrine (*dhūta*) and the thought crossed his mind that he was looking on the Lord who was all seeing, all-knowing and possessed of absolute perfect knowledge. Then he told Ānanda the short story of his own ordination by the Buddha. He said that approaching the Lord in reverence he addressed him in these words: 'Lord you are my master and I am your disciple, Sugata.' The Lord, he spoke to Ānanda, said to him thus in reply: 'O Kāśyapa, I am your master and you are my disciple.' Then the Tathāgata gave Mahā-Kāśyapa an exhortation on how to train himself to abide by the restraint of the disciplinary rules, posturing in the field of good conduct and discerning the peril of the minutest faults and also adopting and practising the moral precepts and living a life of complete purity in thought, speech and act. The Lord in this exhortation referred to the fact of the body being not one that is permanently assembled. He also asked Mahā-Kāśyapa to train himself on discerning of the arising and of the cessation of the five *skandhas* on which existence thrives and gave him a lesson on the *pratītya-samutpāda* doctrine. Mahā-Kāśyapa then told the venerable



Ānanda that after he had been given the exhortation, he was a probationer student *śaikṣya* for eight days only having yet to attain before attainment of perfection, but on the ninth day he attained perfect knowledge. Then he reported to Ānanda the exchange of the patched cotton under robe of his with the under robe of ten open rings of the Paṭhagata. Thus did he become a genuine son of the Lord born of *dharma* created by *dharma*, an heir as to *dharma* and not as to the flesh. His three knowledges, his six super knowledges and mastery of the powers and nothing else he had lost. After this the five hundred monks in Ānanda's charge harboured no more doubt or mistrust on Māhā Kassapa to whom their obedience became greater and better than before. The desprayed nun Śāhānandā remained, however, unreconciled and she uncovered herself before Māhā Kassapa and died immediately and on account of her hard-heartedness against the sage was reborn in a great hell—such was the tradition.

### THE PRINCIPLES OF THE BUDDHAS

After the demise of the Buddha Māhā Kassapa became anxious to see that Buddha's religion continues in full glory and that all *śāstha* act up to the behests of the Buddha. At such a time Kassapa feared that a schism may arise and sectarians and heretics might harm the peerless doctrine and so he advised them to try to collect the teachings of the Master नमस्सिद्धे शास्त्रेण जगत् 1-20 and to recite the Sugata's excellent teaching without a break and in perfect unison so that the recital, well and truly made, may long have bright renown among men and gods. Kassapa wanted the assembly to remove all doubts about the Master's teaching. He asked the venerable Kāśyapa to speak of the conduct and career of great-hearted kings of *dharma*. In course of his reply regarding the careers of all seeing Buddhas of unshakable conduct, Kāśyapa told Kassapa of the famous *Datadharmā* principles now advocated in the *Mahāvastu* 1-76 ff. The word *bhumi* literally means earth, or ground.

“तेन अक्षिप्तानां पुनस्तथा, नापथा पुनस्तथासमस्तम् ।

एव ३३ पुनरिदं न पथा, क्षिप्तानां नमस्तद् विदितं ॥” 1-20

The *Mahāvastu* itself defines it by saying 'I 77' that every existence of the Bodhisattvas is shortly defined as an earth, whence has come the name *bhūmi*. As a matter of fact these *bhūmis* are the various stages of development of the qualities of a Bodhisattva towards which he progressively advances. He gradually ascends from one to the next upto the last or the tenth stage. The *Mahāvastu* gives a very detailed description of these stages which cannot be recounted here. Kāśyapa said to Kāśyapa that it was not possible to measure the *bhūmi* of Bodhisattvas and they last the one, two turns or even infinite *kalpas*. However, the text mentions 1-10 the different *bhūmis* thus:— the first being called *dharaṇī*— difficult to ascend, the second *balibhūmi*— firmness, the third *paribhūmi*— adorned with flowers, the fourth *anāra*— firmness, the fifth *atthāṇa*— expanding the mind or heart, the sixth *nirvāṇa*— lovely, the seventh *dharaṇī*— hard to conquer, the eighth *janmanidā*— ascertaining the birth, the ninth deriving its name from *janmanidā*— appointment or installation as Crown Prince, and the tenth from *abhiṣeka*— coronation. The transitions from *bhūmi* to *bhūmi* are dealt with fully. The eight rules of conduct—*amudāhāra*— for Bodhisattvas when they live in the first *bhūmi* or stage are these: 1— liberality (*dāna*), 2— compassion (*kṣama*), 3— indestructibility (*akṣaya*), 4— want of pride i.e. humility (*amā*), 5— study of all the scriptures (*sarva śāstraśyāsa*), 6— heroism (*dhīra*), (7)— asking for permission or approval of people (*prajñā*) and 8— fortitude (*dhīra*). The Bodhisattvas in this stage, conceive the idea of attainment of perfect wisdom by accumulation of merits, the roots of goodness. Then with regard to the second *bhūmi*, the dispositions of Bodhisattvas are related to Kāśyapa by Mahā Kāśyapa saying that Bodhisattvas in the second *bhūmi* feel undoubtedly an aversion to all forms of existence and that herein their dispositions are good: *kṣānti*— patience, *amā*— humble, *śānta*— sweet, *śānta*— keen, *śānta*— beautiful, *śānta*— charming, *śānta*— profound, *śānta*— not losing control, *śānta*— unperturbable, *śānta*— extraordinary, *śānta*— lofty, *śānta*— noble.

“सर्वं जगत्तु बोधिसत्त्वानां उच्छेदकं वा भूमिर्निमित्तं वसिष्ठसिद्धे  
नेव भूमिर्निमित्तं भूमा” । I 77



re, not miserable *akṛpāṇa*, resolute *ananta*, sincere *akṛtrima*, pure *suddha*, steadfast *adha*, independent or free from others' influence *avāṇa*, contented *tripta*, intent on the foremost Person *puṭṭha*, indomitable *ananta*. Their lapses in this *bhūmi* are also related, and on account of these lapses they fail to reach the third stage.

Then Mahā-Kātyāvāna related to Mahā-Kāśyapa the state of heart existing in Bodhisattvas as they ascend the third stage from the second. He said that their stage of mind becomes herein set on renunciation. They want to make all creatures happy and they do this not for their own well being, not even for the sake of enlightenment, and they want to buy one verse of a wise saying even with the sacrifice of wives and children. In order to qualify themselves for attaining the fourth *bhūmi* the Bodhisattvas do not create schisms in the *saṅgha*, nor do they raise *stūpas* to the ground, nor do they harbour any evil thoughts against a Tathagata. They moreover, are not cast down by adversity, nor excited by prosperity.

Then Mahā-Kātyāvāna said to Mahā-Kāśyapa during reply to queries that such Bodhisattvas who are not able to lapse in any way, for any reason, at any time, or by any chance, in their course to the seven other *bhūmis*, never pass into a hell nor are reborn in any brute state, but they are capable of becoming Brahmins, Indras, Nāga kings, universal kings *chakravartins*, chief counsellors, chief heads of guilds, leaders, royal sons etc. Thus do they bring their career to maturity. In this the fourth *bhūmi* the Bodhisattvas evolve the idea of enlightenment.

Then the *Mahāvastu* expounds and illustrates the merits and demerits of Bodhisattvas in the fifth *bhūmi*. Herein are mentioned the names of some of the Buddhas worshipped by the Lord Gautama when he was in the fifth *bhūmi* and several other universal kings of good merit at their times. In this connexion we have the names of the Buddhas as: (1) Yasa-vrata worshipped by the present Gautama Buddha born as a merchant's son, (2) Sudarsana worshipped by the universal King Dharanidhara, (3) Narayana worshipped by the universal King Aparājita, (4) Suprabha worshipped by a minister named Vijaya, (5) Tathagata Ratana-parvata worshipped by a universal King Achyuta, (6) the perfect



Buddha Kanakaparvata worshipped by the universal King, Priyadarśana, 7 Lord Puṣhpādanta worshipped by a king named Durjaya, 8 a Buddha named Lalitavikrama worshipped by King Caturangabala, 9 Lord Mahāyasa worshipped by King Megapatisvara, and 10 Jina Ratana-chuda worshipped by a universal king named Manuśhāna. These kings and others offered great gifts to these Jinās and made their vows to them praying that they might themselves become perfect Buddhas and also lead a host all men taken into the great flood of recurrent births and may live in peace by dragging their minds from all sorts of attachments ("उत्तिष्ठन्मोहजालो वसन्निबलो ममगन्धर्विभानी। तारेय्य सर्वजनतो नसारमोहार्णवे दक्षितं" II I 119).

Regarding questions of the Buddhas held and *upakṣepa* with reference to dispositions in the sixth *bhūmi*, Mahā-Kāśyapa said that many fields are not empty of Buddhas and certain others are empty. Buddhas winning perfect knowledge and mindful of welfare of all beings appear very rarely. It is the nature of Buddhas to achieve the whole difficult task of a Buddha, set before him. Sometimes only two Tathagatas could appear, if one Buddha is not equal to the conditions of Buddhahood. Otherwise no two valiant men are born in one and the same field, as men reject the notion of the inadequate nature of the great seers ("न चासमवसद्भवो वर्धयन्ति महविश्वः। तस्माद् दुर्वे न जायन्ते एककक्षे नरवर्धनी II" I 122). Buddhas never pass away without fulfilling the Buddha-tasks. Mahā-Kāśyapa then revealed the Buddha-lands in the eastern, southern, western and northern quarters of the world and in its nadir and zenith where Buddhas of various names respectively preach *dharma*. He also replied to the query of Mahā-Kāśyapa as to whether there was possibility of all beings being released by the preaching of so many Buddhas, saying that there cannot be a limit to the countless beings listening to the teaching of the Buddhas, as the average worldlings were numerous, rather more numerous than the numerous worlds.

Lastly, it was said in the book that as the *Bodhisattvas* in the sixth *bhūmi* sometimes envy those who have won cessation of perception and feeling, they lapse, and cannot advance towards the seventh *bhūmi* or stage.



As the Bodhisattvas advance to the seventh *bhūmi*, their mind is bent on self-control. Mahā Kātyāvāna spoke to Mahā-Kāśyapa that the Bodhisattvas preach and commend abstention from killing. After passing through the seven *bhūmis* they show pity to those beings who begin on their lot, apply themselves to the practice of morality, renounce their kingdoms and powers and go out of home to a homeless condition. In this context Kātyāvāna recited some stories regarding Gautama Buddha in his previous lives and illustrated some of his supreme virtues and proved the wicked actions of Devadatta. Such good and difficult acts of body, thought and speech are performed by Bodhisattvas. Of the manifold good qualities they possess we find mention in the *Mahā-astu* of mastery over *karma*, resoluteness, endurance, trustworthiness, uprightness and sincerity. They are generous, firm, gentle, tender, patient, tranquil of heart, brilliantly intelligent, gifted with insight, not given to gratification of sensual pleasures, pure in conduct, full of civility to elderly people, and of persuasive speech, ready to help people in distress, equal in adversity and prosperity, and skilful in uprooting the vices of men. They are anxious to win the sphere of power of a Buddha, skilled in teaching, loving even their enemies. They possess the knowledge of correct and faulty conclusions. Then we find a very beautiful and logical view that all great men working for the benefit and welfare of humanity are so many Bodhisattvas. For the *Mahāvastu* writes that all charms and medicines were discovered by Bodhisattvas, all remedies current in the world were prescribed by them, all sciences devoted to the ascertainment of truth were developed by them, all mathematical calculations and forms of writing in different scripts were introduced by them, and all the mines of gold, silver, copper, lead, precious metals and gems were revealed by them. In short, all expedients that exist for the service of men were their inventions. Mahā-Kātyāvāna lastly said that as Bodhisattvas advance from the seventh to the eighth *bhūmi* their hearts become set on great compassion. Then the *Mahāvastu* enumerates the hundreds of names of the previous powerful, renowned and Aryan Buddhas under whom Sākyamuni Buddha acquired the root of merit while he advanced from the first up to the seventh

*bhumi*. Then the book mentions again hundreds of the host of Aryan Buddhas in the ninth *bhumi*. Māhī-Kāśyapa then told Māhī-Kāśyapa regarding those Bodhisattvas who passed through the ninth *bhumi* and encompassed the tenth after having won to the Tu-lu-ta-*tha-na* and thence descending to a mother's womb to lead his last human extraordinary existence, not shared by Pratyeka-Buddhas, nor by saints, nor by disciples, nor by average people. The book states how they become conceived in mother's womb, without the intercourse of a father and a mother but by their own merit only ("स्वशुचिनिर्मुक्ता उपपादुका भवन्ति" I 145). Description is obtained in the book of such great men's wonderful conception, their emergence from mother's womb and their attendance by gods. Māhī-Kāśyapa was told also that these Bodhisattvas are also to practise all the arts of mankind without any help from teachers and they do not indulge in the pleasures of sense. In answer to the former's query as to how Rahula was born, the latter replied saying that passing away from Tusita heaven he came down into the womb of his mother Yasodharā the Kāśyapa's maiden ("अथ राहुल स्तुतिनकायाञ्च पयसिना मातु यशोधरायाः कश्चिपकस्याया कुक्षिजयतीति इति । एव अनुभूयते यत्ते भो पुनरभवत्" I 153). Then the retirement from the world of the Buddhas was narrated and Māhī-Kāśyapa referred to Bodhisattva Gautama's resolve not to enter again the fair city of Kapilavastu before he has passed beyond the power of old age and death ("न न पुनरहं प्रवेक्ष्यमग्राप्य जरावरक्षवारमिति" I 157). This is the brief description of the *ten bhumis* in the *Mahāvastu*.

### PLURALITY OF BUDDHAS

Now I shall give a brief note on the cult of plurality of Buddhas prevalent in society during the period of the *Mahāvastu*. The Buddhists like the Brāhmanic Hindus, believed deeply in re-births (*saṃsāra-roḍa*), so innumerable and countless Buddhas are conceived to have appeared in the previous *kalpas* according to Buddhist scriptures, specially in the Mahāvāna literature. Gautama Buddha is himself mentioned as having adored, through immeasurable *kalpas* in his previous births, countless Tathagatas, Arhans and even per-

fect Buddhas. The Mahayana cultus abides in the existence of many Buddhas. In some Pali books we get reference to only seven Buddhas including Gautama Buddha, and in other later Pali books we learn of twenty-four Buddhas. In this cult we feel that a conception of an eternal Buddha runs through such ideas. In the *Mahāvastu* however, we have a discourse III 224 ff. called *Itthi-Buddhi-sūtra* wherein we find those Buddhas described as gentle-hearted *mridu-chitta*, loving-hearted *maitra-chitta*, controlled hearted *dhṛta-chitta*, calm-hearted *anta-chitta*, free hearted *mukta-chitta*, pure hearted *suddha-chitta*, firm hearted *sthita-chitta*, unattached hearted *aṅga-chitta* and so on, and they are also the best of Brahmanas *Brāhmaṇottamā*, nobles or Kshatriyas versed in the Vedas *Vedapārṇga* and what is more important they are speakers in an unequivocal manner *aviparivāḍin*, speaking what is not false *avataṭṭhāroḍin* and ever speaking what is not untrue *asamyathā ādin*. We know that Gautama Buddha called himself *Tathāgata* i.e., one who has attained the *tathā* or truth or reality. According to the *Mahāvastu* Buddha, while once staying at Srāvastī told Ānanda that he sat there for three months abiding in the states of former Tathāgatas *pūrnā-Tathāgata*, Arhats *Arhata* and perfect Buddhas *samyak-sambuddhas*. There are several traditional lists of a legion of former Buddhas each of whom proclaimed the next one. Gautama Buddha himself was proclaimed by the previous Buddha, Kāśyapa. Of course, the names of the famous ones viz., Vipassin, Śākyi, Visvabhū, Krakucchandā, Koṇakamuni, Kāśyapa and Śakyamuni all occur therein. You are all aware that in the succession of these Buddhas, the last Buddha, as proclaimed by Lord Śakyamuni will be Maitreya. This future *ananta* Buddha will also be mighty in power, and the leader of a host of peers and a teacher of seventy hundred *koti* of men ("एतेषां बुद्धानां काश्यपो, संज्ञेयो परिचयको भविष्यति । महानुभावो बुद्धिसचनयको, जिनव्यति कोटिस्तनानि मयति" II 230). Being asked by Ānanda regarding the root of Buddha's shining performances in the world of gods and men, the Lord replied by saying that it is he who planted in all great former Buddhas the root of virtue *Anulaṃbā* and rendered them service, and so they became mighty in

power, infinite in wisdom and famous in the world. He also said that his power also prevailed because he honoured these previous sublime Buddhas and he on that account attained glory and fame shining in the worlds of men, *devas* and *Brahma*. In rapture Ananda declared that he had now come to comprehend the sphere of these many Buddhas which the Lord said as being beyond thought, beyond compare and beyond measure. Buddha himself further said in this connection that as a *paramārtihadarṣin* knowing the highest truth or good, he was equal and peer of the previous Buddhas.

In this context we may note a strange fact learnt from the *Mahāvastu* also, that regarding the birth (*jāti*) of the Buddhas, they are mentioned as all being born either in the *Brāhmaṇa* or the *Kṣatriya* family. Buddha himself said that he was born in the *Kṣatriya* family of *Ikṣhvāku*, a kinsman of the *āditya*, the sun, and the future Buddha, he declared, would be born in a very rich and prosperous *Brāhmaṇa* family, but he would renounce his plentiful pleasures of the world and accept religious life. He referred in passing that *Dipankara* Buddha, *Vipaśyin*, *Sikhī* and *Viśvabhū* were born in *Kṣatriya* families and *Krakucchābhandā*, *Konakamuni* and *Kāśyapa* in *Brāhmaṇa* families. The *Mahāvastu* recounts declaring thus:—“These supreme persons arise in one of two kinds of families—either in a family of the *Kṣatriya* or in one of *Brahmaṇa*. When the *Kṣatriyas* are reputed as foremost in the world, the Buddhas, the supreme men, appear in the family of the *Kṣatriyas*, and when the *Brahmanas* are reputed for their worth in the world they, the great seers, are born in the *Brāhmaṇa* families” (“*द्विहिमेव ते कुलेहि उत्पद्यन्ति नरोत्तमाः । क्षत्रियकुले च प्रथमं भवन्वापि राज्ञकुले ॥ यदाहि भवति माव्याता लोकस्मिं भोजि क्षत्रिया । तदा क्षत्रियकुले भूया उत्पद्यन्ति नरोत्तमाः ॥ यदा तु गुणसङ्गता लोकस्मिं भोजि ब्राह्मणा ॥ तदा ब्राह्मणकुले भूया उत्पद्यन्ति महर्षिण ॥” 111 247-248).*

As to the excellent traits in the character of all Buddhas, the Lord said that energy (*vīrya*) is the instrument of enlightenment and that they progressed because of their virtues of renunciation (*parithiṇa*), charity (*dāna*), self-control (*dama*), and restraint (*samyama*). He himself attained enlightenment in the ninety-first *kalpa* since his efforts. All Buddhas belauded the virtues of liberality (*dāna*), morality (*śīla*) and wisdom



(*prajna*)—The past Buddhas were exalted leaders of *dharma* and they stated their positions were revered and honoured and were self-dependent.

PRATITYASAMUTPADE: THE CHAINTAINING AND THE  
MADHYAMĀ PRATIPADĀ

I refrain from discussing fully the famous and well-known Buddhist formula of *pratityasamutpada* (प्रतीत्यसमुत्पाद) as treated in the *Mahāvastu*, specially in the *Mara-vijaya* episode as described in the second *Paribhāṣitā* II 293 ff. You all know that in the allegorical story of Gautama's victory over Evil—the Mara—the Bodhisattva, struck the earth with his right hand and the whole earth resounded and a panic was produced and Mara's ill-starred army fled away. The Bodhisattva without any tremor shone like the Sun. He then declared according to the *Mahāvastu* the famous doctrine of the *Pratityasamutpatti* i.e. the chain of causes and effects, or in the words, the law of happening by way of a cause, or the law of no-nature of a thing or phenomenon depending on another as its cause. He expressed the formula thus:

'This is ill or misery, this is the arising of ill, this is the cessation of ill, and there is the Way meaning the *Madhyama-pratipadī*, the Middle Path, the *Aṣṭāṅga-marga*. When *this* exists, *that* appears when *this* is destroyed, *that* disappears or ceases to be' ("इदं अ दुःखं सद्यं अ समुद्भवः तथा निरोधो अममार्गश्च यो। इमस्मिं सज्जे इमो प्राकुर्भोति इमस्मिं नट्टे इदमस्मिमेति" II 345).

Then the Bodhisattva further developed the idea of the chain of cause and effect in these words: "From ignorance (*अविद्या*) arises the make-up (*संस्कार*) of coming-to-be which again causes consciousness (*विज्ञान*) and from this is born individuality (*नामरूप*). This individuality gives rise to the six-fold faculties of the senses (*षडायतन*) which again results in contact (*स्पर्श*). This contact causes the rise of feelings (*वेदना*) which, in its turn, produces craving (*तृष्णा*) which itself causes grasping (*उपादान*). This grasping becomes the cause of one's passing from life to life (*जन्म*) and thence comes birth (*जनि*), old age, death and disease and from these arise all kinds of sorrow, lamentations, troubles, ills and despair (*दुःख*)" (II 346,



After His investigation into the *dharma* (nature) of causation, the cessation (*nirōḍha*) of those things became clear to His omniscience. Understanding their nature to be such, the Bodhisattva attained the peerless, noble and supreme enlightenment'.

In this treatise the *Mahāvastu*, which is so full of Buddhist ethical principles, we get reference to, in addition to the four Aryan truths (*चतुसार्थसत्य*), the *Ārya-aṣṭaṅgika-mārga* or the *mudhānā pratipadā*, the Middle Path (III 331 in the discourse on the rolling of the wheel. It is the Aryan eight-fold Way (*आर्याष्टांगिका*), that is to say, right belief (*सम्यग्दृष्टिः*), right purpose or resolve (*सम्यग्प्रवृत्त्य*), right endeavour (*सम्यगभ्यास*), right action (*सम्यक्कर्म*), right living or occupation (*सम्यगजीव*), right speech (*सम्यग्वा*), right mindfulness (*सम्यक्स्मृतिः*) and right concentration (*सम्यकसमाधि*). The reform the middle course awakened to by the Tathagata in his Aryan *dharma* and discipline (*विनय*) and this course when adopted confers insight (*चक्षुकरणयोग*), conduces to calm (*उपसमाधयनिका*), to disgust with the world (*निर्विहाये*), to passionlessness (*विरागा*), to cessation (*निरोधये*), to the state of a recluse (*आमन्याये*), to enlightenment (*प्रज्ञायाये*), and to nirvāṇa (*निर्विहाये*). Detailing out these topics here is out of the question.

#### BUDDHA-PŪJĀ (WORSHIP OF THE BUDDHA) PREVALENT IN THE TIME OF THE MAHĀVASTU

The *Mahāvastu* puts the following verses (II. 362) in the mouth of Lord Buddha about the efficacy of the worship of the Buddha:—

“अविद्या हेतुं भवमस्कृतस्य, तं प्रत्ययं भवति ज्ञानमाय ।  
 विज्ञानहेतुं भवे नामकम्, प्रत्ययं च तं भवति चरित्रियस्य ॥  
 चरित्रियं भवति तस्य स्वर्गजगत, स्वर्गं च हेतुं भवे वेदनाया ।  
 सुवेदयन्तो जायन्ति भुक्त्वा, भुक्त्वा प्रत्ययं भवति उपादान ॥  
 उपादानहेतुं भवं सत्त्वमस्ति, जालो जलामरकं तथैव स्याधिः ।  
 जालो च भोति परिवेषितानि, जालाया ( ? ) भोति दुःखदोर्मनस्य ॥  
 प्रतीत्ययस्य प्रविचिन्तो बोधिसत्त्वो, निरोधस्तेषामधिकं तथैव ज्ञाने ।  
 तेषां च धर्मं अकृतिं पश्यमानो, अनुस्य प्राप्तो परमधर्माधिः ॥

II. 345-346

"कोपाय विन लभेयं हिताय सर्वप्रणिना ।  
 यत् स्तूपं लोकनाथस्य कथीति जमिद्विदिता ॥  
 समन मनो मत मनो पुण्यमनो विहारको ।  
 भानि सर्वत्र जायन्तु वरन्तो कोपिकारिका" ॥

"The person called a son of the Buddha who, having turned his thoughts for attainment of enlightenment only for the sake of welfare of all living beings, goes round saluting reverentially, a tope of the Saviour of the world becoming, in all places in all his lives, mindful, though full, various and assured as he fares on the way to enlightenment." It is also said that such beings shall themselves become saviours of the world, all-seeing with passions stifled and lusts destroyed ("सर्वे च सर्वत्र सिद्धं लोकनाथा, समस्तजगु हतरजमिद्विदिता" || 373), and they are destined to become peerless Buddhas in the world after having for a long time pursued the good in their various lives ("अविशर्षं बुधिर कारिकासु, लो बुद्धो लंके भवति जगुस्थो" || 373). Then we find in this book 'in the *Aralaketa-nutta* an enumeration of the simple methods of *Buddha piya*, which, if resorted to with devotion, will lead to accumulation of incalculable merits as a result of which they will never become confounded by appearances and will be able to perceive the unsubstantiality or soullessness and emptiness or non-existence of all *dharma*s (the things or appearances in the objective world).

Briefly speaking, the methods are the following:—

- (1) salutation of a tope and monuments erected in the Buddha's honour;
- (2) placing of a garland or a festoon of fine silk on a tope or a monument containing the relics of the Buddha,
- (3) offering of flowers, burning a pinch of incense in Buddhist shrines;
- (4) putting a flag on the Lord's shrines,
- (5) holding a single light over the tope;
- (6) placing thereon a sun-shade;
- (7) honouring the Buddha by playing on instruments of music in shrines,
- (8) putting adornments on the shrines,
- (9) cleansing the topes and washing away dust therein;
- (10) offering of dried cow-dung cakes in shrines for preparing fire therein,



- (11) offering even a drop of oil at a top\*,
- (12) taking bricks and carrying them to shrines,
- (13) anointing shrines with perfumes,
- (14) placing a necklace of gems on them,
- (15) giving one trustful thought to the Buddha,
- (16) bringing net work coverings to shrines,
- (17) taking and throwing away faded flowers from shrines,
- (18) sprinkling of sandal wood powder thereon,
- (19) making a reverential bow before a top\*,
- (20) offering of a bowl in Buddha's name for his acceptance, and,
- (21) forming a resolution in mind that they (these worshippers) may set free the un-free and in their own emancipated state may become an eye to the blind and dispel their gloom and darkness, and may lead across the beings who have not crossed, may fare without a tremor through the whole world, and release those in misery.

We are told that such benefactors and worshippers of the *Buddha*, the *Dharma* and the *Sangha* never feel troubled by any ills of the world and they may become distinguished wealthy merchants, householders possessing wonderful treasures, king's sons, ministers and even powerful universal rulers.

### THE PRATYEKA-BUDDHAS

The concept of the Pratyeka-Buddhas is found to have developed to good extent during the period represented by the *Mahastava*. These are self-controlled and self-possessed ascetics who attain enlightenment without proclaiming it to the world. In Buddhist dogmatics the Pratyeka-Buddhas attain enlightenment for themselves by themselves without the aid of any teachers and they do not even propose to act as teachers to others. They arise whenever Buddhas do not appear in the world (III 27). These individually enlightened saintly persons may be countless. They are splendid in their silence, possessing great power, remaining almost in loneliness, like the rhinoceros, taming and calming only their own selves and passing away almost finally after winning enlightenment. They, however, do not possess the



five eyes, viz. the eye of the flesh (मांसचक्षुः), the deva eye (दिव्यचक्षुः), the eye of wisdom (प्रज्ञाचक्षुः), the eye of dharma (धर्मचक्षुः), and the eye of a Buddha (बुद्धचक्षुः), which all can only be possessed by the Buddhas (I, 158). They function to constitute a field for winning merit. They are objects of receiving offerings from other people. Their deportment and demeanour are described in the *Mahāvastu* in many a context. They have courteous manner with regard to their approach and leave, they look forward and around, they extend and withdraw their hands and they carry with them their cloak, bowl and robes. They look like *nagas* (elephants). They appear to have accomplished their task. Their organs of sense are turned inwards and their mind is not turned outwards. They do not look in any way disturbed, because of their achievement of harmony with the *dharma*. They never look forward beyond a plough's length. Such was their auspicious deportment.

In this connection we may compare the deportment and demeanour of the Buddha which appeared first to Sāriputra, when he saw the Lord from a distance as described in the *Mahāvastu* (III, 63-64).

#### A NEW JĀTAKA (THE ANANGANA JĀTAKA)

In my first lecture it was said that the *Mahāvastu* also contains some new Jātaka stories, which are not found included in the Pali Jātaka stories. Here I shall briefly place before you a sample of such a new Jātaka (II, 271-276), called *Anangana Jātaka*. The monks asked Lord Buddha of the great prosperity and uncommon wealth possessed by the householder, Jyotishka, who was admitted into the Order and ordained, and then became fully free from all faults. The Buddha replied saying that there was, many *kr̥pā* ago, a king named Bandhuma ruling from his capital Bandhanatī. He was the father of the great previous Buddha Vipassin. It may be told in passing that the *Dayāvadāna* also has described the wealth, prosperity and piety of Jyotishka, the householder, and as in the *Mahāvastu* so in that book, the monks enquired from the Buddha about what good deed was performed by Jyotishka in a former life to win such a good fortune in this life. In this Jātaka we are told that King

Bandhuma invited Lord Vipasyin to his capital which was the native place of the Lord. At that time there was a householder, a very rich merchant named Anaṅgaṇa living in that city. First of all, it was he who approached Lord Vipasyin, and invited the Lord to be entertained by him for three months and the Lord accepted this invitation proffered to him first by the householder, and so He (the Lord) could not accept the king's invitation to be similarly entertained. The king got fretted by the action of Anaṅgaṇa, the householder. The king (Bandhuma) requested the Lord to eat with himself one day, and with Anaṅgaṇa the next day. The Lord replied: "That may be possible, if however Anaṅgaṇa (the accepted host) gives his consent to such an arrangement." The king sent for Anaṅgaṇa and threatened him saying that his term of life would come to its end, if he went against his king's pleasure. A compromise between the king and Anaṅgaṇa was reached and it was so arranged that Lord Vipasyin would be the king's guest on one day and Anaṅgaṇa's the next. Anaṅgaṇa always improved upon the hospitality to the Lord shown by the king at his turn. The prime minister was asked by the king to hinder the better success of Anaṅgaṇa in the matter of entertaining the Lord, his son. On the king's last entertaining day he arranged for a royal reception to the Lord in his large and beautiful park which was decorated gaily with all sorts of luxuries such as sandal-seats for the Lord's monks, young attendants decked in finery, and well-caparisoned lordly elephants holding umbrellas over the guests. The king issued an order prohibiting sellers of wood and stick to sell them to any body under threat of penalty. When Anaṅgaṇa heard of this prohibition he became sad and reflective because of the difficulty he would fall into for cooking food for the Lord and his monks for the last day. In this predicament Śakra, the Lord of devas, appeared in person before Anaṅgaṇa and by his own power provided the householder with all sorts of excellent food, seats, pavilion (constructed immediately at Śakra's order by Viśvakarman, as if by magic), elephants including his own Bravana elephant, sun-shades and attendants. Anaṅgaṇa requested king Bandhuma to come and wait upon the saṅgha, along with

himself. On entering the pavilion the king wondered at seeing the varied display, and thought that this marvel must have been produced by the power of merit of the householder, Anangana. When the meals were finished, Anangana expressed his vow in this way—"On account of my meritorious gifts and my good actions may I partake of a unique celestial happiness and win the favour of such a unique Master who would teach me the *dharma*? And may I understand the *dharma*, and renouncing the world may I become free from all lusts!"

Gautama Buddha now told the monks that the present householder Jyoushka was in that life the householder, Anangana, during the former Buddha Vipasyin's time.

Very often even in old Indian Society a sort of competition between a king and rich householders could be observed in showing their splendour of wealth in giving reception to high personages—even to a Buddha. In the above Jataka story we also observe people's deep belief in meritorious deeds leading to high position in life. Belief in *karma* and *pannāntarāśāda* are in the core of Indian philosophical thoughts. A belief also in the personal appearance of gods before virtuous people was also prominent in religious thoughts of old



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